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14.



GUY FAWKES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,
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Guy Fawkes and Humphrey Chetham rescuing Father
Oldcorne & Viviana Radcliffe from the Pursuivant

GUY FAWKES;

OR,

THE GUNPOWDER TREASON.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

BY

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH.

AUTHOR OF THE "TOWER OF LONDON," ETC.

"You shall swear by the blessed Trinity, and by the sacrament you now propose to receive, never to disclose directly or indirectly, by word or circumstance, the matter that shall be proposed to you to keep secret; nor desist from the execution thereof till the rest shall give you leave."

Oath of the Conspirators.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1841.

14.


BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA ·

TO

MRS. HUGHES,

KINGSTON LISLE, BERKS.

My dear Mrs. Hughes,

You are aware that this Romance was brought to a close during my last brief visit at Kingston Lisle, when the time necessary to be devoted to it deprived me of the full enjoyment of your society, and, limiting my range—no very irksome restriction,—to your own charming garden and grounds, prevented me from accompanying you in your walks to your favourite and beautiful downs. This circumstance, which will suffice to give it some interest in your eyes by associating it with your residence, furnishes me with a plea, of which I gladly avail myself, of inscribing it with your name, and of recording, at the same time, the

high sense I entertain of your goodness and worth, the value I set upon your friendship,—a friendship shared in common with some of the most illustrious writers of our time,—and the gratitude I shall never cease to feel for attentions and kindnesses little less than maternal, which I have experienced at your hands.

In the hope that you may long continue to diffuse happiness round your own circle, and contribute to the instruction and delight of the many attached friends with whom you maintain so active and so interesting a correspondence; and that you may live to see your grandsons fulfil their present promise, and tread in the footsteps of their high-minded and excellent-hearted father,—and of *his* father! I remain

Your affectionate and obliged friend,

W. Harrison Ainsworth.

Kensal Manor House, Harrow Road,
July 26, 1841.

PREFACE.

THE tyrannical measures adopted against the Roman Catholics in the early part of the reign of James the First, when the severe penal enactments against recusants were revived, and with additional rigour, and which led to the remarkable conspiracy about to be related, have been so forcibly and faithfully described by Doctor Lingard,* that the following extract from his history will form a fitting introduction to the present work.

"The oppressive and sanguinary code framed in the reign of Elizabeth, was re-enacted to its full extent, and even improved with additional severities. Every individual who had studied or resided, or should afterwards study or reside in any college or seminary beyond the sea, was rendered incapable of inheriting, or purchasing, or enjoying lands, annuities, chattels, debts, or

* Vide History of England, vol ix. New Edition.

sums of money, within the realm; and as missionaries sometimes eluded detection under the disguise of tutors, it was provided that no man should teach even the rudiments of grammar in public or in private, without the previous approbation of the diocesan.

"The execution of the penal laws enabled the king, by an ingenious comment, to derive considerable profit from his past forbearance. It was pretended that he had never forgiven the penalties of recusancy; he had merely forbidden them to be exacted for a time, in the hope that this indulgence would lead to conformity; but his expectations had been deceived; the obstinacy of the Catholics had grown with the lenity of the sovereign; and, as they were unworthy of further favour, they should now be left to the severity of the law. To their dismay, the legal fine of twenty pounds per lunar month was again demanded, and not only for the time to come, but for the whole period of the suspension; a demand which, by crowding thirteen payments into one, reduced many families of moderate in-

comes to a state of absolute beggary. Nor was this all. James was surrounded by numbers of his indigent countrymen. Their habits were expensive, their wants many, and their importunities incessant. To satisfy the more clamorous, a new expedient was devised. The king transferred to them his claims on some of the more opulent recusants, against whom they were at liberty to proceed by law, in his name, unless the sufferers should submit to compound by the grant of an annuity for life, or the immediate payment of a considerable sum. This was at a time when the jealousies between the two nations had reached a height, of which, at the present day, we have but little conception. Had the money been carried to the royal coffers, the recusants would have had sufficient reason to complain; but that Englishmen should be placed by their king at the mercy of foreigners, that they should be stripped of their property to support the extravagance of his Scottish minions, this added indignity to injustice, exacerbated their already wounded feelings, and goaded the most mo-

derate almost to desperation." From this deplorable state of things, which is by no means over-coloured in the above description, sprang the Gunpowder Plot.

The county of Lancaster has always abounded in Catholic families, and at no period were the proceedings of the ecclesiastical commissioners more rigorous against them than at that under consideration. Manchester, "the Goshen of this Egypt," as it is termed by the fiery zealot, Warden Heyrick, being the place where all the recusants were imprisoned, the scene of the early part of this history has been laid in that town and its immediate neighbourhood. For the introduction of the munificent founder of the Blue Coat Hospital into a tale of this description I ought, perhaps, to apologize, but if I should succeed by it in arousing my fellow-townsmen to a more lively appreciation of the great benefits they have derived from him, I shall not regret what I have written.

In Viviana Radcliffe I have sought to portray the loyal and devout Catholic, such as I conceive the character to have existed at the

period. In Catesby, the unscrupulous and ambitious plotter, masking his designs under the cloak of religion. In Garnet, the subtle, and yet sincere Jesuit. And in Fawkes the gloomy and superstitious enthusiast. One doctrine I have endeavoured to enforce throughout,—TOLERATION.

From those who have wilfully misinterpreted one of my former productions, and have attributed to it a purpose and an aim utterly foreign to my own intentions, I can scarcely expect fairer treatment for the present work. But to that wider and more discriminating class of readers from whom I have experienced so much favour and support, I confidently commit these volumes, certain of meeting with leniency and impartiality.

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GUY FAWKES.

Book the First.

THE PLOT.

Their searches are many and severe. They come either in the night or early in the morning, and ever seek their opportunity, when the Catholics are or would be best occupied, or are likely to be worse provided or look for nothing. They willingliest come when few are at home to resist them, that they may rifle coffers, and do what they list. They lock up the servants, and the mistress of the house, and the whole family, in a room by themselves, while they, like young princes, go rifling the house at their will.

Letter to Verstegan, ap. Stonyhurst MSS.

What a thing is it for a Catholic gentleman to have his house suddenly beset on all sides with a number of men in arms, both horse and foot! and not only his house and gardens, and such enclosed places all beset, but all highways laid, for some miles near unto him, that none shall pass, but they shall be examined! Then are these searchers oft-times so rude and barbarous, that, if the doors be not opened in the instant they would enter, they break open the doors with all violence, as if they were to sack a town of enemies won by the sword.

Father Gerard's MS.

CHAPTER I.

AN EXECUTION IN MANCHESTER, AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

More than two hundred and thirty-five years ago, or, to speak with greater precision, in 1605, at the latter end of June, it was rumoured one morning in Manchester that two seminary priests, condemned at the late assizes under the severe penal enactments then in force against the Papists, were about to suffer death on that day. Attracted by the report, large crowds flocked towards the place of execution, which, in order to give greater solemnity to the spectacle, had been fixed at the southern gate of the old Collegiate Church, where a scaffold was erected. Near it was a large blood-stained block, the use of which will be readily divined, and adjoining the block,

upon a heap of blazing coals, smoked a caldron filled with boiling pitch, intended to receive the quarters of the miserable sufferers.

The place was guarded by a small band of soldiers, fully accoutred in corslets and morions, and armed with swords, half-pikes, and calivers. Upon the steps of the scaffold stood the executioner, — a square-built, ill-favoured personage, busied in arranging a bundle of straw upon the boards. He was dressed in a buff jerkin, and had a long-bladed, two-edged knife thrust into his girdle. Besides these persons, there was a pursuivant, — an officer appointed by the Privy Council to make search throughout the provinces for recusants, Popish priests, and other religious offenders. He was occupied at this moment in reading over a list of suspected persons.

Neither the executioner nor his companions appeared in the slightest degree impressed by the butcherly business about to be enacted; for the former whistled carelessly as he pursued his task, while the latter laughed and chatted with the crowd, or jestingly pointed their matchlocks at the jackdaws wheeling above them in the sunny

air, or perching upon the pinnacles and tower of the neighbouring fane. Not so the majority of the assemblage. Most of the older and wealthier families in Lancashire still continuing to adhere to the ancient faith of their fathers, it will not be wondered that many of their dependants should follow their example. And, even of those who were adverse to the creed of Rome, there were few who did not murmur at the rigorous system of persecution adopted towards its professors.

At nine o'clock, the hollow rolling of a muffled drum was heard at a distance. The deep bell of the church began to toll, and presently afterwards the mournful procession was seen advancing from the market-place. It consisted of a troop of mounted soldiers, equipped in all respects like those stationed at the scaffold, with their captain at their head, and followed by two of their number with hurdles attached to their steeds, on which were tied the unfortunate victims. Both were young men — both apparently prepared to meet their fate with firmness and resignation. They had been brought from Radcliffe Hall—an old moated and fortified mansion

belonging to a wealthy family of that name, situated where the close, called Pool Fold now stands, and then recently converted into a place of security for recusants; the two other prisons in Manchester—namely, the New Fleet on Hunt's Bank, and the gaol on Salford Bridge,—not being found adequate to the accommodation of the numerous religious offenders.

By this time, the cavalcade had reached the place of execution. The soldiers drove back the throng with their pikes, and cleared a space in front of the scaffold; when, just as the cords that bound the limbs of the priests were unfastened, a woman in a tattered woollen robe, with a hood partially drawn over her face,—the features of which, so far as they could be discerned, were sharp and attenuated,—a rope girded round her waist, bare feet, and having altogether the appearance of a sister of Charity, sprang forward, and flung herself on her knees beside them.

Clasping the hem of the garment of the nearest priest, she pressed it to her lips, and gazed earnestly at him, as if imploring a blessing.

"You have your wish, daughter," said the

priest, extending his arms over her. "Heaven and Our Lady bless you!"

The woman then turned towards the other victim, who was audibly reciting the *Miserere*.

"Back, spawn of Antichrist!" interposed a soldier, rudely thrusting her aside. "Don't you see you disturb the father's devotions? He has enough to do to take care of his own soul without minding yours."

"Take this, daughter," cried the priest who had been first addressed, offering her a small volume, which he took from his vest, "and fail not to remember in your prayers the sinful soul of Robert Woodroofe, a brother of the order of Jesus."

The woman put out her hand to take the book; but before it could be delivered to her, it was seized by the soldier.

"Your priests have seldom anything to leave behind them," he shouted, with a brutal laugh, "except some worthless and superstitious relic of a saint or martyr. What's this? Ah! a breviary—a mass-book. I've too much regard for your spiritual welfare to allow you to re-

ceive it," he added, about to place it in his doublet.

"Give it her," exclaimed a young man, snatching it from him, and handing it to the woman, who disappeared as soon as she had obtained possession of it.

The soldier eyed the new-comer as if disposed to resent the interference, but a glance at his apparel, which, though plain, and of a sober hue, was rather above the middle class, as well as a murmur from the crowd, who were evidently disposed to take part with the young man, induced him to stay his hand. He, therefore, contented himself with crying, "A recusant! a Papist!"

"I am neither recusant nor Papist, knave!" replied the other, sternly; "and I counsel you to amend your manners, and show more humanity, or you shall find I have interest enough to procure your dismissal from a service which you disgrace."

This reply elicited a shout of applause from the mob.

"Who is that bold speaker?" demanded the pursuivant from one of his attendants.

"Humphrey Chetham of Crumpsall," answered the man; "son to one of the wealthiest merchants of the town, and a zealous upholder of the true faith."

"He has a strange way of showing his zeal," rejoined the pursuivant, entering the answer in his note-book. "And who is the woman he befriended?"

"A half-crazed being called Elizabeth Orton," replied the attendant. "She was scourged and tortured during Queen Elizabeth's reign for pretending to the gift of prophecy, and was compelled to utter her recantation within yonder church. Since then she has never opened her lips."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the pursuivant: "I will engage to make her speak, and to some purpose. Where does she live?"

"In a cave on the banks of the Irwell, near Ordsall Hall," replied the attendant. "She subsists on the chance contributions of the charitable; but she solicits nothing,—and, indeed, is seldom seen."

"Her cave must be searched," observed the

pursuivant; "it may be the hiding-place of a priest. Father Campion was concealed in such another spot at Stonor Park, near Henley-on-Thames, where he composed his '*Decem Rationes*;' and, for a long time, eluded the vigilance of the commissioners.—We shall pass it in our way to Ordsall Hall to-night, shall we not?"

The attendant nodded an affirmative.

"If we surprise Father Oldcorne," continued the pursuivant, "and can prove that Sir William Radcliffe and his daughter, both of whom are denounced in my list, are harbourers and shelterers of recusants, we shall have done a good night's work."

At this moment, an officer advanced, and commanded the priests to ascend the scaffold.

As Father Woodroofe, who was the last to mount, reached the uppermost step, he turned round and cried in a loud voice, "Good people, I take you all to witness that I die in the true Catholic religion, and that I rejoice and thank God with all my soul, that he hath made me worthy to testify my faith therein by shedding my blood in this manner." He then advanced to-

wards the executioner, who was busied in adjusting the cord round his companion's throat, and said, "God forgive thee — do thine office quickly;" adding in a lower tone, "*Asperge me, Domine; Domine, miserere mei!*"

And, amid the deep silence that ensued, the executioner performed his horrible task.

The execution over, the crowd began to separate slowly, and various opinions were expressed respecting the revolting and sanguinary spectacle just witnessed. Many, who condemned — and the majority did so — the extreme severity of the laws by which the unfortunate priests had just suffered, uttered their sentiments with extreme caution; but there were some whose feelings had been too much excited for prudence, and who inveighed loudly and bitterly against the spirit of religious persecution then prevailing: while a few others of an entirely opposite persuasion looked upon the rigorous proceedings adopted against the Papists, and the punishment now inflicted upon their priesthood, as a just retribution for their own severities during the reign of Mary. In general, the common people enter-

tained a strong prejudice against the Catholic party, — for, as it has been shrewdly observed, "they must ever have some object to hate; heretofore it was the Welsh, the Scots, or the Spaniards, but now in these latter times only the Papists;" but in Manchester, near which, as has been already stated, so many old and important families, professing that religion, resided, the case was widely different; and the mass of the inhabitants were favourably inclined towards them. It was the knowledge of this feeling that induced the commissioners, appointed to superintend the execution of the enactments against recusants, to proceed with unusual rigour in this neighbourhood.

The state of the Roman Catholic party at the period of this history, was indeed most grievous. The hopes they had indulged of greater toleration on the accession of James the First, had been entirely destroyed. The persecutions, suspended during the first year of the reign of the new monarch, were now renewed with greater severity than ever; and though their present condition was deplorable enough, it was feared that worse

remained in store for them. "They bethought themselves," writes Bishop Goodman, "that now their case was far worse than in the time of Queen Elizabeth; for they did live in some hope that after the old woman's life, they might have some mitigation, and even those who did then persecute them were a little more moderate, as being doubtful what times might succeed, and fearing their own case. But, now that they saw the times settled, having no hope of better days, but expecting that the uttermost rigour of the law should be executed, they became desperate: finding that by the laws of the kingdom their own lives were not secured, and for the carrying over of a priest into England it was no less than high treason. A gentlewoman was hanged only for relieving and harbouring a priest; a citizen was hanged only for being reconciled to the Church of Rome; besides, the penal laws were such, and so executed, that they could not subsist. What was usually sold in shops and usually bought, this the pursuivant would take away from them as being Popish and superstitious. One knight did affirm that in one term he gave twenty nobles in

rewards to the door-keeper of the Attorney-general; another did affirm, that his third part which remained unto him of his estate did hardly serve for his expense in law to defend him from other oppressions; besides their children to be taken from home, to be brought up in another religion. So they did every way conclude that their estate was desperate; they could die but once, and their religion was more precious unto them than their lives. They did further consider their misery; how they were debarred in any course of life to help themselves. They could not practise law,—they could not be citizens,—they could have no office; they could not breed up their sons—none did desire to match with them; they had neither fit marriages for their daughters, nor nunneries to put them into; for those few which are beyond seas are not considerable in respect of the number of recusants, and none can be admitted into them without great sums of money, which they, being exhausted, could not supply. The Spiritual Court did not cease to molest them, to excommunicate them, then to imprison them; and thereby they were utterly disenabled to sue

for their own." Such is a faithful picture of the state of the Catholic party at the commencement of the reign of James the First.

Pressed down by these intolerable grievances, is it to be wondered at that the Papists should repine,—or that some among their number, when all other means failed, should seek redress by darker measures? By a statute of Elizabeth, all who refused to conform to the established religion were subjected to a fine of twenty pounds a lunar month; and this heavy penalty, remitted, or rather suspended, on the accession of the new sovereign, was again exacted, and all arrears claimed. Added to this, James, whose court was thronged by a host of needy Scottish retainers, assigned to them a certain number of wealthy recusants, and empowered them to levy the fines, —a privilege of which they were not slow to avail themselves. There were other pains and penalties provided for by the same statute, which were rigorously inflicted. To withdraw, or seek to withdraw another from the established religion was accounted high treason, and punished accordingly; to hear mass involved a penalty of one

hundred marks and a year's imprisonment; and to harbour a priest, under the denomination of a tutor, rendered the latter liable to a year's imprisonment, and his employer to a fine of ten pounds a-month. Impressed with the belief that, in consequence of the unremitting persecutions which the Catholics underwent in Elizabeth's time, the religion would be wholly extirpated, Doctor Allen, a Lancashire divine, who afterwards received a cardinal's hat, founded a college at Douay, for the reception and education of those intending to take orders. From this university a number of missionary priests, or seminarists, as they were termed, were annually sent over to England; and it was against these persons, who submitted to every hardship and privation, to danger, and death itself, for the welfare of their religion, and in the hope of propagating its doctrines, that the utmost rigour of the penal enactments was directed. Among the number of seminarists despatched from Douay, and capitally convicted under the statute above-mentioned, were the two priests whose execution has just been narrated.

As a portion of the crowd passed over the old bridge across the Irwell connecting Manchester with Salford, on which stood an ancient chapel erected by Thomas de Booth, in the reign of Edward the Third, and recently converted into a prison for recusants, they perceived the prophetess, Elizabeth Orton, seated upon the stone steps of the desecrated structure, earnestly perusing the missal given her by Father Woodroofe. A mob speedily collected round her; but, unconscious seemingly of their presence, the poor woman turned over leaf after leaf, and pursued her studies. Her hood was thrown back, and discovered her bare and withered neck, over which her dishevelled hair streamed in long sable elf-locks. Irritated by her indifference, several of the by-standers, who had questioned her as to the nature of her studies, began to mock and jeer her, and endeavoured by plucking her robe, and casting little pebbles at her, to attract her attention. Roused at length by these annoyances, she arose; and fixing her large black eyes menacingly upon them, was about to stalk away, when they surrounded and detained her.

"Speak to us, Bess," cried several voices. "Prophesy — prophesy."

"I *will* speak to you," replied the poor woman, shaking her hand at them, "I *will* prophesy to you. And mark me, though ye believe me not, my words shall not fall to the ground."

"A miracle! a miracle!" shouted the bystanders. "Bess Orton, who has been silent for twenty years, has found her tongue at last."

"I have seen a vision, and dreamed a dream," continued the prophetess. "As I lay in my cell last night, meditating upon the forlorn state of our religion, and of its professors, methought nineteen shadowy figures stood before me—ay, nineteen—for I counted them thrice—and when I questioned them as to their coming,—for my tongue, at first, clove to the roof of my mouth, and my lips refused their office,—one of them answered in a voice which yet rings in my ears, 'We are the chosen deliverers of our fallen and persecuted church. To us is intrusted the rebuilding of her temples,—to our hands is committed the destruction of her enemies. The work will be done in darkness and in secret,—

with toil and travail,—but it will at length be made manifest; and when the hour is arrived, our vengeance will be terrible and exterminating.' With these words, they vanished from my sight. Ah!" she exclaimed, suddenly starting, and passing her hand across her brow, as if to clear her sight, "it was no dream—no vision. I see one of them now."

"Where? where?" cried several voices.

The prophetess answered by extending her skinny arm towards some object immediately before her.

All eyes were instantly turned in the same direction, when they beheld a Spanish soldier—for such his garb proclaimed him—standing at a few paces' distance from them. He was wrapped in an ample cloak, with a broad-leafed steeple-crowned hat, decorated with a single green feather, pulled over his brows, and wore a polished-steel brigandine, trunk loose, and buff boots drawn up to the knees. His arms consisted of a brace of petronels thrust into his belt, whence a long rapier depended. His features were dark as bronze, and well-formed, though strongly marked,

and had an expression of settled sternness. His eyes were grey and penetrating, and shaded by thick beetle-brows; and his physiognomy was completed by a black peaked beard. His person was tall and erect, and his deportment soldier-like and commanding. Perceiving he had become an object of notice, the stranger cast a compassionate look at the prophetess, who still remained gazing fixedly at him, and throwing her a few pieces of money, strode away.

Watching his retreating figure till it disappeared from view, the crazed woman tossed her arms wildly in the air, and cried, in a voice of exultation, "Did I not speak the truth?—did I not tell you I had seen him? He is the deliverer of our church, and is come to avenge the righteous blood which hath been this day shed."

"Peace, woman, and fly while there is yet time," cried the young man who had been designated as Humphrey Chetham. "The pursuivant and his myrmidons are in search of you."

"Then they need not go far to find me," replied the prophetess. "I will tell them what I told these people, that the day of bloody retri-

bution is at hand,—that the avenger is arrived. I have seen him twice,—once in my cave, and once again here,—even where you stand."

"If you do not keep silence and fly, my poor creature," rejoined Humphrey Chetham, "you will have to endure what you suffered years ago, —stripes, and perhaps torture. Be warned by me—ah! it is too late. He is approaching."

"Let him come," replied Elizabeth Orton, "I am ready for him."

"Can none of you force her away?" cried Humphrey Chetham, appealing to the crowd; "I will reward you."

"I will not stir from this spot," rejoined the prophetess, obstinately; "I will testify to the truth."

The kind-hearted young merchant, finding any further attempt to preserve her fruitless, drew aside.

By this time, the pursuivant and his attendants had come up. "Seize her!" cried the former, "and let her be placed within this prison till I have reported her to the commissioners. If you will confess to me, woman," he added in a whis-

per to her, "that you have harboured a priest, and will guide us to his hiding-place, you shall be set free."

"I know of no priests but those you have murdered," returned the prophetess, in a loud voice, "but I will tell you something that you wot not of. The avenger of blood is at hand. I have seen him. All here have seen him. And you shall see him—but not now—not now."

"What is the meaning of this raving?" demanded the pursuivant.

"Pay no heed to her talk," interposed Humphrey Chetham; "she is a poor crazed being, who knows not what she says. I will be surety for her inoffensive conduct."

"You must give me surety for yourself, sir," replied the pursuivant. "I have just learnt that you were last night at Ordsall Hall, the seat of that 'dangerous temporiser,'—for so he is designated in my warrant,—Sir William Radcliffe. And if report speaks truly, you are not altogether insensible to the charms of his fair daughter, Viviana."

"What is this to thee, thou malapert knave?"

cried Humphrey Chetham, reddening partly from anger, partly, it might be, from another emotion.

"Much, as you shall presently find, good Master Wolf-in-sheep's-clothing," retorted the pursuivant; "if you prove not a rank Papist at heart then do I not know a true man from a false."

This angry conference was cut short by a piercing scream from the prophetess. Breaking from the grasp of her captors, who were about to force her into the prison, she sprang with a single bound upon the parapet of the bridge; and utterly regardless of her dangerous position, turned, and faced the soldiers, who were struck mute with astonishment.

"Tremble!" she cried in a loud voice,—"tremble, ye evil-doers! Ye who have despoiled the house of God,—have broken his altars,—scattered his incense,—slain his priests. Tremble, I say. The avenger is arrived. The bolt is in his hand. It shall strike king, lords, commons,—all! These are my last words,—take them to heart."

"Drag her off!" roared the pursuivant, furiously.

"Use care—use gentleness, if ye are men!" cried Humphrey Chetham.

"Think not you can detain me!" cried the prophetess. "Avaunt, and tremble!"

So saying she flung herself from the parapet.

The height from which she fell was about fifty feet. Dashed into the air like jets from a fountain by the weight and force of the descending body, the water instantly closed over her. But she rose to the surface of the stream, about twenty yards below the bridge.

"She may yet be saved," cried Humphrey Chetham, who with the by-standers had hurried to the side of the bridge.

"You will only preserve her for the gallows," observed the pursuivant.

"Your malice shall not prevent my making the attempt," replied the young merchant. "Ha! assistance is at hand."

The exclamation was occasioned by the sudden appearance of the soldier in the Spanish dress, who rushed towards the left bank of the river, which was here, as elsewhere, formed of red sandstone rock, and following the course of the cur-

rent, awaited the next appearance of the drowning woman. It did not occur till she had been carried a considerable distance down the stream, when the soldier, swiftly divesting himself of his cloak, plunged into the water, and dragged her ashore.

"Follow me," cried the pursuivant to his attendants. "I will not lose my prey."

But before he gained the bank of the river, the soldier and his charge had disappeared, nor could he detect any traces of them.

CHAPTER II.

ORDSALL CAVE.

After rescuing the unfortunate prophetess from a watery grave in the manner just related, the soldier snatched up his cloak, and, taking his dripping burthen in his arms, hurried swiftly along the bank of the river, until he came to a large cleft in the rock, into which he crept, taking the prophetess with him, and thus eluded observation. In this retreat he continued upwards of two hours, during which time the poor creature, to whom he paid every attention that circumstances would admit, had so far recovered as to be able to speak. But it was evident that the shock had been too much for her, and that she was sinking fast. She was so faint that she could scarcely move; but she expressed a strong desire to reach her cell before she breathed her last.

Having described its situation as accurately as she could to the soldier,—who before he ventured forth peeped out to reconnoitre,—he again raised her in his arms, and by her direction struck into a narrow lane skirting the bank of the river.

Pursuing this road for about half a mile, he arrived at the foot of a small knoll, covered by a clump of magnificent beech-trees, and still acting under the guidance of the dying woman, whose voice grew more feeble each instant, he mounted it, and from its summit took a rapid survey of the surrounding country. On the opposite bank of the river stood an old hall, while further on, at some distance, he could perceive through the trees the gables and chimneys of another ancient mansion.

"Raise me up," said Elizabeth Orton, as he lingered on this spot for a moment. "In that old house, which you see yonder, Hulme Hall, I was born. I would willingly take one look at it before I die."

"And the other hall which I discern through the trees is Ordsall, is it not?" inquired the soldier.

"It is," replied the prophetess. "And now let us make what haste we can. We have not far to go; and I feel I shall not last long."

Descending the eminence, and again entering the lane, which here made a turn, the soldier approached a grassy space, walled in on either side by steep sandstone rocks. At the further extremity of the enclosure, after a moment's search, by the direction of his companion, he found, artfully concealed by overhanging brushwood, the mouth of a small cave. He crept into the excavation, and found it about six feet high, and of considerable depth. The roof was ornamented with Runic characters and other grotesque and half-effaced inscriptions, while the sides were embellished with Gothic tracery, amid which the letters I.H.S, carved in ancient church text, could be easily distinguished. Tradition assigned the cell to the priests of Odin, but it was evident that worshippers at other and holier altars had more recently made it their retreat. Its present occupant had furnished it with a straw pallet and a small wooden crucifix fixed in a recess in the wall. Gently depositing her upon the pallet, the soldier

took a seat beside her on a stone slab at the foot of the bed. He next, at her request, as the cave was rendered almost wholly dark by the overhanging trees, struck a light, and set fire to a candle placed within a lantern.

After a few moments passed in prayer, the recluse begged him to give her the crucifix that she might clasp it to her breast. This done, she became more composed, and prepared to meet her end. Suddenly, as if something had again disturbed her, she opened wide her glazing eyes, and starting up with a dying effort, stretched out her hands.

"I see him before them!" she cried. "They examine him,—they adjudge him! Ah! he is now in a dungeon! See, the torturers advance! He is placed on the rack—once—twice—thrice —they turn the levers! His joints snap in their sockets — his sinews crack! Mercy! he confesses! He is led to execution. I see him ascend the scaffold!"

"Whom do you behold?" inquired the soldier, listening to her in astonishment.

"His face is hidden from me," replied the

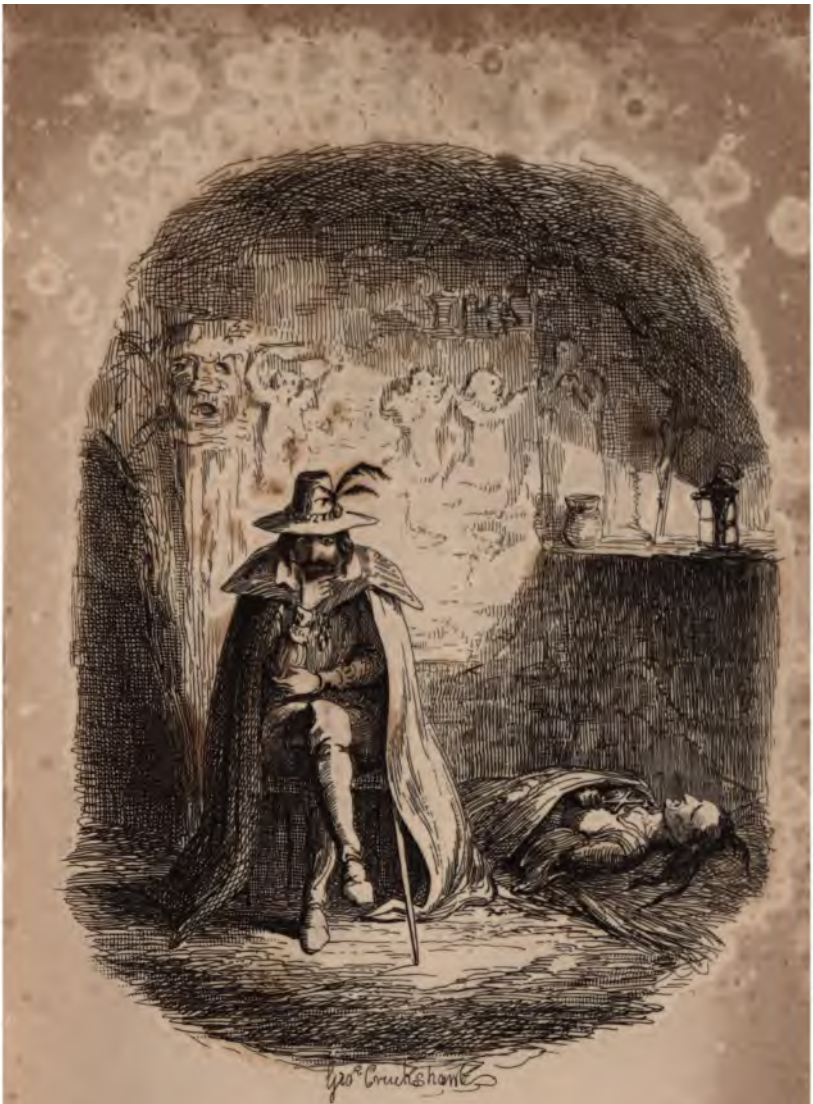
prophetess; "but his figure is not unlike your own. Ha! I hear the executioner pronounce his name. How are you called?"

"GUY FAWKES," replied the soldier.

"It is the name I heard," rejoined Elizabeth Orton.

And, sinking backward, she expired.

Guy Fawkes gazed at her for some time till he felt assured that the last spark of life had fled. He then turned away, and placing his hand upon his chin, became lost in deep reflection.



Guy Fawkes in Ordsall Cave

CHAPTER III.

ORDSALL HALL.

Soon after sunset, on the evening of the events previously related, the inmates of Ordsall Hall were disturbed and alarmed (for in those times of trouble any casual disturbance at night was sufficient to occasion alarm to a Catholic family) by a loud clamour for admittance from some one stationed at the farther side of the moat, then, as now, surrounding that ancient manorial residence. The drawbridge being raised, no apprehension was entertained of an attempt at forcible entrance on the part of the intruder, who, so far as he could be discerned in the deepening twilight, rendered yet more obscure by the shade of the trees under which he stood, appeared to be a solitary horseman. Still, for fear of a surprise, it was judged prudent by those inside the hall to

turn a deaf ear to the summons; nor was it until it had been more than once repeated in a peremptory tone that any attention was paid to it. The outer gate was then cautiously opened by an old steward, and a couple of serving-men, armed with pikes and swords, who demanded the stranger's business, and were answered that he desired to speak with Sir William Radcliffe. The steward rejoined that his master was not at home, having set out the day before for Chester; but that even if he were, he would take upon himself to affirm that no audience would be given, on any pretence whatever, to a stranger at such an unseasonable hour. To this the other replied, in a haughty and commanding voice, that he was neither a stranger to Sir William Radcliffe, nor ignorant of the necessity of caution, though in this instance it was altogether superfluous; and, as notwithstanding the steward's assertion to the contrary, he was fully persuaded his master *was* at home, he insisted upon being conducted to him without further parley, as his business would not brook delay. In vain the steward declared he had spoken the truth. The

stranger evidently disbelieved him; but, as he could obtain no more satisfactory answer to his interrogations, he suddenly shifted his ground, and inquired whether Sir William's daughter, Mistress Viviana, was likewise absent from home.

"Before I reply to the question, I must know by whom and wherefore it is put?" returned the steward, evasively.

"Trouble not yourself further, friend, but deliver this letter to her," rejoined the horseman, flinging a packet across the moat. "It is addressed to her father, but there is no reason why she should not be acquainted with its contents."

"Take it up, Olin Birtwissel," cried the steward, eyeing the packet which had fallen at his feet suspiciously,—"take it up, I say, and hold it to the light, that I may consider it well before I carry it to our young mistress. I have heard of strange treacheries practised by such means, and care not to meddle with it."

"Neither do I, good Master Heydocke," replied Birtwissel. "I would not touch it for a twelvemonth's wages. It may burst, and spoil my good looks, and so ruin my fortunes with the

damsels. But here is Jeff Gellibronde, who having no beauty to lose, and being, moreover, afraid of nothing, will pick it up for you."

"Speak for yourself, Olin," rejoined Gellibronde, in a surly tone. "I have no more fancy for a shattered limb, or a scorched face, than my neighbours."

"Dolts!" cried the stranger, who had listened to these observations with angry impatience, "if you will not convey my packet, which has nothing more dangerous about it than an ordinary letter, to your mistress, at least acquaint her that Mr. Robert Catesby, of Ashby St. Legers, is without, and craves an instant speech with her."

"Mr. Catesby!" exclaimed the steward, in astonishment. "If it be indeed your worship, why did you not declare yourself at once?"

"I may have as good reason for caution as yourself, Master Heydocke," returned Catesby, laughing.

"True," rejoined the steward; "but, methinks, it is somewhat strange to find your worship here, when I am aware that my master expected to meet you, and certain other honourable

gentlemen that you wot of, at a place in a clean opposite direction,—Holywell, in Flintshire."

"The cause of my presence, since you desire to be certified of the matter, is simply this," replied Catesby, urging his steed towards the edge of the moat, while the steward advanced to meet him on the opposite bank, so that a few yards only lay between them; "I came round by Manchester," he continued in a lower tone, "to see if any assistance could be rendered to the unfortunate fathers Woodroofe and Forshawe; but found on my arrival this morning that I was too late, as they had just been executed."

"Heaven have mercy on their souls!" ejaculated Heydocke, shuddering, and crossing himself. "Yours was a pious mission, Mr. Catesby. Would it had been availing!"

"I would so, too, with all my soul!" rejoined the other, fervently; "but fate ordained it otherwise. While I was in the town, I accidentally learnt from one, who informed me he had just parted with him, that your master was at home; and, fearing he might not be able to attend the meeting at Holywell, I resolved to proceed hither

at nightfall, when my visit was not likely to be observed; having motives, which you may readily conjecture, for preserving the strictest secrecy on the occasion. The letter was prepared in case I should fail in meeting with him. And now that I have satisfied your scruples, good master steward, if Sir William be really within, I pray you lead me to him forthwith. If not, your young mistress must serve my turn, for I have that to say which it imports one or other of them to know."

"In regard to my master," replied the steward, "he departed yesterday for Chester, on his way to join the pilgrimage to St. Winifred's Well, as I have already assured your worship. And whoever informed you to the contrary, spoke falsely. But I will convey your letter and message to my young mistress, and on learning her pleasure as to receiving you, will instantly return, and report it. These are dangerous times, your worship,—dangerous times. A good Catholic knows not whom to trust, there are so many spoilers abroad."

"How, sirrah!" cried Catesby, angrily, "do you apply that observation to me?"

"Far be it from me," answered Heydocke, respectfully, "to apply any observation that may sound offensive to your worship, whom I know to be a most worthy gentleman, and as free from heresy, as any in the kingdom. I was merely endeavouring to account for what may appear my over-caution in detaining you where you are, till I learn my lady's pleasure. It is a rule in this house not to lower the drawbridge without orders after sunset; and I dare not, for my place, disobey it. Young Mr. Humphrey Chetham, of Crumpsall, was detained in the like manner no later than last night; and he is a visiter," he added, in a significant tone, "who is not altogether unwelcome to my mistress—ahem! But duty is no respecter of persons; and in my master's absence my duty is to protect his household. Your worship will pardon me."

"I will pardon anything but your loquacity and tediousness," rejoined Catesby, impatiently. "About your errand quickly."

"I am gone, your worship," returned the steward, disappearing with his companions.

Throwing the bridle over his horse's neck, and

allowing him to drink his fill from the water of the moat, and afterwards to pluck a few mouthfuls of the long grass that fringed its brink, Catesby abandoned himself to reflection. In a few moments, as the steward did not return, he raised his eyes, and fixed them upon the ancient habitation before him,—ancient, indeed, it was not at this time, having been in a great measure rebuilt by its possessor, Sir William Radcliffe, during the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth, in the rich and picturesque style of that period. Little could be distinguished of its projecting and retiring wings, its walls decorated with black and white chequer-work, the characteristic of the class of architecture to which it belonged, or of its magnificent embayed windows filled with stained glass; but the outline of its heavy roof, with its numerous gables, and groups of tall and elaborately-ornamented chimneys might be distinctly traced in strong relief against the warm and still-glowing western sky.

Though much gone to decay, grievously neglected, and divided into three separate dwelling-houses, Ordsall Hall still retains much of its

original character and beauty; and viewed at the magic hour above described, when the changes produced by the lapse of years cannot be detected, it presents much the same striking appearance that it offered to the gaze of Catesby. Situated on the north bank of the Irwell, which supplies the moat with a constant stream of fresh water, it commands on the south-west a beautiful view of the winding course of the river here almost forming an island, of Trafford Park and its hall, of the woody uplands beyond it, and of the distant hills of Cheshire. The mansion itself is an irregular quadrangle, covering a considerable tract of ground. The gardens, once exquisitely laid out in the formal taste of Elizabeth's days, are also enclosed by the moat, surrounding (except in the intervals where it is filled up) a space of some acres in extent. At the period of this history, it was approached on the north-east by a noble avenue of sycamores, leading to within a short distance of its gates.

As Catesby surveyed this stately structure, and pondered upon the wealth and power of its owner, his meditations thus found vent in words:—"If

I could but link Radcliffe to our cause, or win the hand of his fair daughter, and so bind him to me, the great attempt could not fail. She has refused me once. No matter.—I will persevere till she yields. With Father Oldcorne to back my suit, I am assured of success. She is necessary to my purpose, and shall be mine."

Descended from an ancient Northamptonshire family, and numbering among his ancestry the well-known minister of the same name, who flourished in the reign of Richard the Third, Robert Catesby,—at this time about forty,—had in his youth led a wild and dissolute life; and though bred in the faith of Rome, he had for some years abandoned its worship. In 1580, when the Jesuits, Campion and Persons, visited England, he was reconciled to the church he had quitted, and thenceforth became as zealous a supporter and promoter of its doctrines as he had heretofore been their bitter opponent. He was now actively engaged in all the Popish plots of the period, and was even supposed to be connected with those designs of a darker dye which were set on foot for Elizabeth's destruction,—with Somerville's con-

spiracy,—with that of Arden and Throckmorton, —the latter of whom was his uncle on the maternal side,—with the plots of Bury and Savage,—of Ballard,—and of Babington. After the execution of the unfortunate Queen of Scots, he devoted himself to what was termed the Spanish faction, and endeavoured to carry out the schemes of a party, who, distrusting the vague promises of James, were anxious to secure the succession to a Catholic,—the Infanta of Spain, or the Duke of Parma. On the insurrection of the Earl of Essex, he took part with that ill-fated nobleman; and, though he escaped condign punishment for the offence, he was imprisoned and heavily fined.

From this time his career ran in darker channels. "Hunger-starved for innovation," as he is finely described by Camden,—imbued with the fiercest religious fanaticism,—eloquent, wily, resolute,—able alike to delude the powerful and intimidate the weak, — he possessed all the ingredients of a conspirator. Associating with men like himself, of desperate character and broken fortunes, he was ever on the look out for some means of retrieving his own condition, and re-

dressing the wrongs of his church. Well informed of the actual state of James's sentiments, when, on that monarch's accession, confident hopes were entertained by the Romanists of greater toleration for their religion, Catesby was the first to point out their mistake, and to foretel the season of terrible persecution that was at hand. On this persecution he grounded his hopes—hopes, never realized, for the sufferers, amid all the grievances they endured, remained constant in their fidelity to the throne—of exciting a general insurrection among the Catholics.

Disappointed in this expectation,—disappointed, also, in his hopes of Spain, of France, and of aid from Rome, he fell back upon himself, and resolved upon the execution of a dark and dreadful project which he had long conceived, and which he could execute almost single-handed, without aid from foreign powers, and without the co-operation of his own party. The nature of this project, which, if it succeeded, would, he imagined, accomplish all or more than his wildest dreams of ambition or fanaticism had ever conceived, it will be the business of this history to develope. Without

going further into detail at present, it may be mentioned that the success of the plot depended so entirely on its secrecy, and so well aware was its contriver of the extraordinary system of espionage carried on by the Earl of Salisbury and the Privy Council, that for some time he scarcely dared to trust it out of his own keeping. At length, after much deliberation, he communicated it to five others, all of whom were bound to silence by an oath of unusual solemnity; and as it was necessary to the complete success of the conspiracy that its outbreak should be instantaneously followed by a rise on the part of the Catholics, he darkly hinted that a plan was on foot for their deliverance from the yoke of their oppressors, and counselled them to hold themselves in readiness to fly to arms at a moment's notice. But here again he failed. Few were disposed to listen to him; and of those who did, the majority returned for answer, "that their part was endurance, and that the only arms which Christians could use against lawful powers in their severity were prayers and tears."

Among the Popish party of that period, as in

our own time, were ranked many of the oldest and most illustrious families in the kingdom,—families not less remarkable for their zeal for their religion than, as has before been observed, for their loyalty;—a loyalty afterwards approved in the disastrous reign of James the Second, by their firm adherence to what they considered the indefeasible right of inheritance. Plots, indeed, were constantly hatched throughout the reigns of Elizabeth and James by persons professing the religion of Rome; but in these the mass of the Catholics had no share. And even in the seasons of the bitterest persecution, when every fresh act of treason, perpetrated by some lawless and disaffected individual, was visited with additional rigour on their heads,—when the scaffold reeked with their blood, and the stake smoked with their ashes,—when their quarters were blackening on the gates and market-crosses of every city in the realm,—when their hearths were invaded, their religion proscribed, and the very name of Papist had become a by-word,—even in those terrible seasons, as in the season under consideration, they remained constant in their fidelity to the crown.

From the troubled elements at work some fierce and turbulent spirits were sure to arise,—some gloomy fanatics who, having brooded over their wrongs, real or imaginary, till they had lost all scruples of conscience, hesitated at no means of procuring redress. But it would be unjust to hold up such persons as representatives of the whole body of Catholics. Among the conspirators themselves there were redeeming shades. All were not actuated by the same atrocious motives. Mixed feelings induced Catesby to adopt the measure. Not so Guy Fawkes, who had already been leagued with the design. One idea alone ruled him. A soldier of fortune, but a stern religious enthusiast, he supposed himself chosen by Heaven for the redemption of his Church, and cared not what happened to himself, provided he accomplished his (as he conceived) holy design.

In considering the causes which produced the conspiracy about to be related, and in separating the disaffected party of the Papists from the temperate, due weight must be given to the influence of the priesthood. Of the Romish clergy there

were two classes — the secular priests, and the Jesuits and missionaries. While the former, like the more moderate of the laity, would have been well-contented with toleration for their religion, the latter breathed nothing but revenge, and desired the utter subversion of the existing government,—temporal as well as ecclesiastical. Men, for the most part, of high intellectual powers, of untiring energy, and unconquerable fortitude, they were enabled by their zeal and ability to make many proselytes. By their means, secret correspondence was carried on with the different courts of Europe; and they were not without hope that, taking advantage of some favourable crisis, they should yet restore their church to its former supremacy. To these persons,—who held as a maxim, "*Qui religionem Catholicam deserit regnandi jus omne amisit*,"— Catesby and his associates proved ready and devoted agents. Through their instrumentality, they hoped to accomplish the great work of their restoration. To Father Garnet, the provincial of the English Jesuits, of whom it will be necessary to speak more fully hereafter, the plot had been revealed

by Catesby under the seal of confession; and, though it subsequently became a question whether he was justified in withholding a secret of such importance to the state, it is sufficient for the present purpose to say that he did withhold it. For the treasonable practices of the Jesuits and their faction some palliation may perhaps be found in the unrelenting persecution to which they were subjected; but if any excuse can be admitted for them, what opinion must be formed of the conduct of their temperate brethren? Surely, while the one is condemned, admiration may be mingled with the sympathy which must be felt for the unmerited sufferings of the other!

From the foregoing statement, it will be readily inferred that Sir William Radcliffe, a devout Catholic, and a man of large possessions, though somewhat reduced by the heavy fines imposed upon him as a recusant, must have appeared an object of importance to the conspirators; nor will it be wondered at, that every means were used to gain him to their cause. Acting, however, upon the principles that swayed the well-disposed of

his party, the knight resisted all these overtures, and refused to take any share in proceedings from which his conscience and loyalty alike revolted. Baffled, but not defeated, Catesby returned to the charge on a new point of assault. Himself a widower (or supposed to be so), he solicited the hand of the lovely Viviana Radcliffe, Sir William's only child, and the sole heiress of his possessions. But his suit in this quarter was, also, unsuccessful. The knight rejected the proposal, alleging that his daughter had no inclination to any alliance, inasmuch as she entertained serious thoughts of vowing herself to Heaven. Thus foiled, Catesby ostensibly relinquished his design.

Shortly before the commencement of this history, a pilgrimage to Saint Winifred's Well, in Flintshire, was undertaken by Father Garnet, the provincial of the Jesuists before mentioned, in company with several distinguished Catholic personages of both sexes, and to this ceremonial Sir William and his daughter were urgently bidden. The invitation was declined on the part of Viviana, but accepted by the knight, who, though

unwilling to leave home at a period of so much danger, or to commit his daughter to any care but his own, even for so short a space, felt it to be his duty to give countenance by his presence to the ceremonial.

Accordingly, he departed for Chester on the previous day, as stated by the steward. And, though Catesby professed ignorance on the subject, and even affirmed he had heard to the contrary, it may be doubted whether he was not secretly informed of the circumstance, and whether his arrival, at this particular conjuncture, was not preconcerted.

Thus much in explanation of what is to follow. —The course of Catesby's reflections was cut short by the return of the steward, who, informing him that he had his mistress's commands to admit him, immediately lowered the drawbridge for that purpose. Dismounting, and committing his steed to one of the serving-men, who advanced to take it, Catesby followed his conductor through a stone gateway, and crossing the garden, was ushered into a spacious and lofty hall, furnished with a long massy oak table, at the upper end of

which was a raised dais. At one side of the chamber yawned a huge arched fire-place, garnished with enormous andirons, on which smouldered a fire composed of mixed turf and wood. Above the chimney-piece hung a suit of chain-armour, with the battle-axe, helmet, and gauntlets of Sir John Radcliffe, the first possessor of Ordsall, who flourished in the reign of Edward the First: on the right, masking the entrance, stood a magnificent screen of carved oak.

Traversing this hall, Heydocke led the way to another large apartment; and placing lights on a Gothic-shaped table, offered a seat to the newcomer, and departed. The room in which Catesby was left was termed the star-chamber — a name retained to this day—from the circumstance of its ceiling being moulded and painted to resemble the heavenly vault when studded with the luminaries of night. It was terminated by a deeply-embayed window filled with stained glass of the most gorgeous colours. The walls, in some places, were hung with arras, in others, wainscoted with dark, lustrous oak, embellished with scrolls, cyphers, and fanciful designs. The

mantel-piece was of the same solid material, curiously carved, and of extraordinary size. It was adorned with the armorial bearings of the family—two bends engrailed, and in chief a label of three, — and other devices and inscriptions. The hearth was considerably raised above the level of the floor, and there was a peculiarity in the construction of the massive wooden pillars flanking it, that attracted the attention of Catesby, who rose with the intention of examining them more narrowly, when he was interrupted by the entrance of the lady of the mansion.

Advancing at a slow and dignified pace, Viviana Radcliffe courteously but gravely saluted her guest; and, without offering him her hand, motioned him to a chair, while she seated herself at a little distance. Catesby had seen her twice before; and whether the circumstances under which they now met might have caused some change in her demeanour he could not tell, but he thought her singularly altered. A year ago, she had been a lively, laughing girl of seventeen, with a bright brown skin, dark flowing tresses, and eyes as black and radiant as those of a gipsy.

She was now a grave, collected woman, infinitely more beautiful, but wholly changed in character. Her complexion had become a clear, transparent white, and set off to great advantage her large, luminous eyes, and jetty brows. Her figure was tall and majestic; her features regular, delicately formed, and of the rarest and proudest class of beauty. She was attired in a dress of black wrought velvet, entirely without ornament except the rosary at her girdle, with a small ebony crucifix attached to it. She wore a close-fitting cap, likewise of black velvet, edged with pearls, beneath which her raven tresses were gathered in such a manner as to display most becomingly the smooth and snowy expanse of her forehead. The gravity of her manner, not less than her charms of person, seemed to have struck Catesby mute. He gazed on her in silent admiration for a brief space, utterly forgetful of the object of his visit, and the part he intended to play. During this pause, she maintained the most perfect composure, and fixing her dark eyes full upon him, appeared to await the moment when he might choose to open the conversation.

Notwithstanding his age, and the dissolute and distracted life he had led, Catesby was still good-looking enough to have produced a favourable impression upon any woman easily captivated by manly beauty. The very expression of his marked and peculiar physiognomy,—in some degree an index to his character,—was sufficient to rivet attention; and the mysterious interest generally inspired by his presence was not diminished on further acquaintance with him. Though somewhat stern in their expression, his features were strikingly handsome, cast in an oval mould, and clothed with the pointed beard and trimmed mustaches invariably met with in the portraits of Vandyck. His frame was strongly built, but well proportioned, and seemed capable of enduring the greatest fatigue. His dress was that of an ordinary gentleman of the period, and consisted of a doublet of quilted silk, of sober colour and stout texture; large trunk-hose swelling out at the hips; and buff boots, armed with spurs with immense rowels. He wore a high and stiffly-starched ruff round his throat; and his apparel was completed by a short cloak of brown

cloth, lined with silk of a similar colour. His arms were rapier and poniard, and his high-crowned plumed hat, of the peculiar form then in vogue, and looped on the "leer-side" with a diamond clasp, was thrown upon the table.

Some little time having elapsed, during which he made no effort to address her, Viviana broke silence.

"I understood you desired to speak with me on a matter of urgency, Mr. Catesby," she remarked.

"I did so," he replied, as if aroused from a reverie; "and I can only excuse my absence of mind and ill manners, on the plea that the contemplation of your charms has driven all other matter out of my head."

"Mr. Catesby," returned Viviana, rising, "if the purpose of your visit be merely to pay unmerited compliments, I must at once put an end to it."

"I have only obeyed the impulse of my heart," resumed the other, passionately, "and uttered what involuntarily rose to my lips. But," he added, checking himself, "I will not offend

you with my admiration. If you have read my letter to your father, you will not require to be informed of the object of my visit."

"I have not read it," replied Viviana, returning him the packet with the seal unbroken. "I can give no opinion on any matter of difficulty. And I have no desire to know any secret with which my father might not desire me to be acquainted."

"Are we overheard?" inquired Catesby, glancing suspiciously at the fire-place.

"By no one whom you would care to overhear us," returned the maiden.

"Then it is as I supposed," rejoined Catesby. "Father Oldcorne is concealed behind that mantel-piece?"

Viviana smiled an affirmative.

"Let him come forth, I pray you," returned Catesby. "What I have to say concerns him as much as yourself or your father; and I would gladly have his voice in the matter."

"You shall have it, my son," replied a reverend personage, clad in a priestly garb, stepping from out one side of the mantel-piece, which

flew suddenly open, disclosing a recess curiously contrived in the thickness of the wall. "You shall have it," said Father Oldcorne, for he it was, approaching and extending his arms over him. "Accept my blessing and my welcome."

Catesby received the benediction with bowed head and bended knee.

"And now," continued the priest, "what has the bravest soldier of our Church to declare to its lowliest servant?"

Catesby then briefly explained, as he had before done to the steward, why he had taken Manchester in his route to North Wales; and, after lamenting his inability to render any assistance to the unfortunate priests, he went on to state that he had accidentally learnt, from a few words let fall by the pursuivant to his attendant, that a warrant had been sent by the Earl of Salisbury for Sir William Radcliffe's arrest.

"My father's arrest!" exclaimed Viviana, trembling violently. "What—what is laid to his charge?"

"Felony," rejoined Catesby, sternly — "felony, without benefit of clergy — for so it is

accounted by the present execrable laws of our land,— in harbouring a Jesuit priest. If he is convicted of the offence, his punishment will be death—death on the gibbet, accompanied by indignities worse than those shown to a common felon."

"Holy Virgin!" ejaculated Father Oldcorne, lifting up his hands, and raising his eyes to heaven.

"From what I gathered the officers will visit this house to-night," continued Catesby.

"Our Lady be praised, they will not find him!" cried Viviana, who had been thrown into an agony of distress. "What is to be done in this frightful emergency, holy father?" she added, turning to the priest, with a supplicating look.

"Heaven only knows, dear daughter," replied Oldcorne. "You had better appeal for counsel to one who is more able to afford it than I am,— Mr. Catesby. Well aware of the crafty devices of our enemies, and having often eluded their snares himself, he may enable you to escape them. My own course is clear. I shall quit this roof at once, deeply and bitterly regretting that by

entering it, I have placed those whom I hold so dear, and from whom I have experienced so much kindness, in such fearful jeopardy."

"Oh, no, father!" exclaimed Viviana, "you shall not go."

"Daughter," replied Oldcorne, solemnly, "I have long borne the cross of Christ,—have long endured the stripes, inflicted upon me by the adversaries of our faith, in patience; and my last actions and last breath shall testify to the truth of our holy religion. But, though I could endure aught on my own account, I cannot consent to bring misery and destruction upon others. Hinder me not, dear daughter. I will go at once."

"Hold, father!" interposed Catesby. "The step you would take may bring about what you are most anxious to avoid. If you are discovered and apprehended in this neighbourhood, suspicion will still attach to your protectors, and the secret of your departure will be wrung from some of the more timid of the household. Tarry where you are. Let the pursuivant make his search. I will engage to baffle his vigilance."

"He speaks the truth, dear father," returned Viviana. "You must not — shall not depart. There are plenty of hiding-places, as you know, within the mansion. Let them be as rigorous as they may in their search, they will not discover you."

"Whatever course you adjudge best for the security of others I will pursue," rejoined Oldcorne, turning to Catesby. "Put me out of the question."

"My opinion has already been given, father," replied Catesby. "Remain where you are."

"But, if the officers should ascertain that my father is at Chester, and pursue him thither?" cried Viviana, suddenly struck by a new cause of alarm.

"A messenger must be immediately despatched after him to give him warning," returned Catesby.

"Will you be that messenger?" asked the maiden, eagerly.

"I would shed my heart's best blood to pleasure you," returned Catesby.

"Then I may count upon this service, for

which, rest assured, I will not prove ungrateful," she rejoined.

"You may," answered Catesby. "And yet I would, on Father Oldcorne's account, that my departure might be delayed till to-morrow."

"The delay might be fatal," cried Viviana. "You must be in Chester before that time."

"Doubt it not," returned Catesby. "Charged with your wishes, the wind shall scarcely outstrip my speed."

So saying, he marched irresolutely towards the door, as if about to depart, when, just as he had reached it, he turned sharply round, and threw himself at Viviana's feet.

"Forgive me, Miss Radcliffe," he cried, "if I once again, even at a critical moment like the present, dare to renew my suit. I fancied I had subdued my passion for you, but your presence has awakened it with greater violence than ever."

"Rise, sir, I pray," rejoined the maiden, in an offended tone.

"Hear me, I beseech you," continued Catesby, seizing her hand. "Before you reject my suit, consider well that in these perilous seasons,

when no true Catholic can call his life his own, you may need a protector."

"In the event you describe, Mr. Catesby," answered Viviana, "I would at once fulfil the intention I have formed of devoting myself to Heaven, and retire to the convent of Benedictine nuns, founded by Lady Mary Percy, at Brussels."

"You would much more effectually serve the cause of your religion by acceding to my suit," observed Catesby, rising.

"How so?" she inquired.

"Listen to me, Miss Radcliffe," he rejoined, gravely, "and let my words be deeply graven upon your heart. In your hands rests the destiny of the Catholic Church."

"In mine!" exclaimed Viviana.

"In yours," returned Catesby. "A mighty blow is about to be struck for her deliverance."

"Ay, marry, is it," cried Oldcorne, with sudden fervour. "Redemption draweth nigh; the year of visitation approacheth to an end; and jubilation is at hand. England shall again be

called a happy realm, a blessed country, a religious people. Those who knew the former glory of religion shall lift up their hands for joy to see it returned again. Righteousness shall prosper, and infidelity be plucked up by the root. False error shall vanish like smoke, and they which saw it shall say where is it become? The daughters of Babylon shall be cast down, and in the dust lament their ruin. Proud heresy shall strike her sail, and groan as a beast crushed under a cart-wheel. The memory of novelties shall perish with a crack, and as a ruinous house falling to the ground. Repent, ye seducers, with speed, and prevent the dreadful wrath of the Powerable. He will come as flame that burneth out beyond the furnace. His fury shall fly forth as thunder, and pitch upon their tops that malign him. They shall perish in his fury, and melt like wax before the fire."

"Amen!" ejaculated Catesby, as the priest concluded. "You have spoken prophetically, father."

"I have but recited a prayer transmitted to me by Father Garnet," rejoined Oldcorne.

"Do you discern any hidden meaning in it?" demanded Catesby.

"Yea, verily, my son," returned the priest. "In the '*false error vanishing like* SMOKE,'—in the '*house perishing with a* CRACK,'—and in the '*fury flying forth as* THUNDER,'—I read the mode the great work shall be brought about."

"And you applaud the design?" asked Catesby, eagerly.

"*Non vero factum probo, sed eventum amo,*" rejoined the priest.

"The secret is safe in your keeping, father?" asked Catesby, uneasily.

"As if it had been disclosed to me in private confession," replied Oldcorne.

"Hum!" muttered Catesby. "Confessions of as much consequence to the state have ere now been revealed, father."

"A decree has been passed by his holiness, Clement VIII, forbidding all such revelations," replied Oldcorne. "And the question has been recently propounded by a learned brother of our order, Father Antonio Delrio, who, in his Magical Disquisitions, putteth it thus:—'Supposing

a malefactor shall confess that he himself or some other has laid GUNPOWDER, or the like combustible matter, under a building—'"

"Ha!" exclaimed Catesby, starting.

"—'And, unless it be taken away,'" proceeded the priest, regarding him fixedly, "'the whole house will be burnt, the prince destroyed, and as many as go into or out of the city will come to great mischief or peril!'" *

"Well!" exclaimed Catesby.

"The point then arises," continued Oldcorne, "whether the priest may make use of the secret thus obtained for the good of the government, and the averting of such danger; and, after fully discussing it, Father Delrio decides in the negative."

"Enough," returned Catesby.

"By whom is the blow to be struck?" asked Viviana, who had listened to the foregoing discourse in silent wonder.

* Confitetur maleficus se vel alium posuisse pulverem vel quid aliud sub tali limine, et nisi tollantur domum comburendam, principem interiturum, quotquot urbem egredienturque in magnam perniciem aut periculum venturos.—DELRIO *Disq. Mag.*, lib. vi. cap. i. [*Edit.* 1600.]

"By me," answered Catesby. "It is for you to nerve my arm."

"You speak in riddles," she replied. "I understand you not."

"Question Father Oldcorne then, as to my meaning," rejoined Catesby; "he will tell you that, allied to you, I could not fail in the enterprise on which I am engaged."

"It is the truth, dear daughter," Oldcorne asseverated.

"I will not inquire further into this mystery," returned Viviana, "for such it is to me. But, believing what you both assert, I answer, that willingly as I would lay down my life for the welfare of our holy religion, persuading myself, as I do, that I have constancy enough to endure martyrdom for its sake,—I cannot consent to your proposal. Nay, if I must avouch the whole truth," she continued, blushing deeply, "my affections are already engaged, — though to one with whom I can never hope to be united."

"You have your answer, my son," observed the priest.

Catesby replied with a look of the deepest mor-

tification and disappointment; and, bowing coldly to Viviana, said, "I now depart to obey your behests, Miss Radcliffe."

"Commend me in all duty to my dear father," replied Viviana, "and believe that I shall for ever feel bound to you for your zeal."

"Neglect not all due caution, father," observed Catesby, glancing significantly at Oldcorne. "Forewarned, forearmed."

"Doubt me not, my son," rejoined the Jesuit. "My prayers shall be for you.

Gentem auferte perfidam
Credentium de finibus,
Ut Christo laudes debitas
Persolvamus alacriter."

After receiving a parting benediction from the priest, Catesby took his leave. His steed was speedily brought to the door by the old steward; and mounting it, he crossed the drawbridge, which was immediately raised behind him, and hastened on his journey.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SEARCH.

IMMEDIATELY after Catesby's departure, Heydocke was summoned to his mistress's presence. He found her with the priest, and was informed that in all probability the house would be visited that night by the messengers of the Privy Council. The old steward received the intelligence as he might have done his death-warrant, and looked so bewildered and affrighted, that Viviana half repented having acquainted him with it.

"Compose yourself, Master Heydocke," she said, trying to reason him out of his fears; "the search may not take place. And if it does, there is nothing to be alarmed at. I am not afraid, you perceive."

"Nothing to be alarmed at, my dear young

lady!" gasped the steward. "You have never witnessed a midnight search for a priest by these ruffianly catchpoles, as I have, or you would not say so. Father Oldcorne will comprehend my uneasiness, and excuse it. The miscreants break into the house like robbers, and treat its inmates worse than robbers would treat them. They have no regard for decency,—no consideration for sex,—no respect for persons. Not a chamber is sacred from them. If a door is bolted, they burst it open; a cabinet locked, they tarry not for the key. They pull down the hangings, thrust their rapier-points into the crevices of the wainscot, discharge their fire-arms against the wall, and sometimes threaten to pull down the house itself, if the object of their quest be not delivered to them. Their oaths, abominations, and menaces are horrible; and their treatment of females, even of your degree, honoured mistress, too barbarous to relate. Poor Lady Nevil died of the fright she got by such a visit at dead of night to her residence in Holborn. Mrs. Vavasour, of York, lost her senses; and many others whom I could mention have been equal sufferers.

Nothing to be alarmed at! Heaven grant, my dear, dear young lady, that you may never be fatally convinced to the contrary!"

"Suppose my apprehensions are as great as your own, Master Heydocke," replied Viviana, who, though somewhat infected by his terrors, still maintained her firmness; "I do not see how the danger is to be averted by idle lamentations and misgivings. We must meet it boldly; and trust to Him who is our only safeguard in the hour of peril, for protection. Do not alarm the household, but let all retire to rest as usual."

"Right, daughter," observed the priest. "Preparations for resistance would only excite suspicion."

"Can you depend on the servants, in case they are examined?" asked Viviana of the steward, who by this time had partially recovered his composure.

"I think so," returned Heydocke; "but the threats of the officers are so dreadful, and their conduct so violent and outrageous, that I can scarcely answer for myself. I would not advise your reverence to remain in that hiding-place,"

he added, pointing to the chimney-piece; "they are sure to discover it."

"If not here, where shall I conceal myself?" rejoined Oldcorne, uneasily.

"There are many nooks in which your reverence might hide," replied the steward; "but the knaves are so crafty, and so well experienced in their vocation, that I dare not recommend any of them as secure. I would advise you to remain on the watch, and, in case of alarm, I will conduct you to the oratory in the north gallery, adjoining Mistress Viviana's sleeping-chamber, where there is a panel in the wall, known only to myself and my master, opening upon a secret passage running many hundred yards underground, and communicating with a small outbuilding on the other side of the moat. There is a contrivance in this passage, which I will explain to your reverence if need be, which will cut off any possibility of pursuit in that quarter."

"Be it so," replied the priest. "I place myself in your hands, good Master Heydocke, well assured of your fidelity. I shall remain throughout the night in this chamber, occupied in my devotions."

"You will suffer me to pray with you, father, I trust," said Viviana.

"If you desire it, assuredly, dear daughter," rejoined Oldcorne; "but I am unwilling you should sacrifice your rest."

"It will be no sacrifice, father, for I should not slumber, even if I sought my couch," she returned. "Go, good Heydocke. Keep vigilant watch: and, if you hear the slightest noise without, fail not to give us warning."

The steward bowed, and departed.

Some hours elapsed, during which nothing occurred to alarm Viviana and her companion, who consumed the time in prayer and devout conversation; when, just at the stroke of two,—as the former was kneeling before her spiritual adviser, and receiving absolution for the slight offences of which a being so pure-minded could be supposed capable,—a noise like the falling of a bar of iron was heard beneath the window. The priest turned pale, and cast a look of uneasiness at the maiden, who said nothing, but snatching up the light, and motioning him to remain quiet, hurried out of the room in search

of the steward. He was nowhere to be found. In vain, she examined all the lower rooms,—in vain, called to him by name. No answer was returned.

Greatly terrified, she was preparing to retrace her steps, when she heard the sound of muttered voices in the hall. Extinguishing her light, she advanced to the door, which was left ajar, and, taking care not to expose herself to observation, beheld several armed figures, some of whom bore dark lanterns, while others surrounded and menaced with their drawn swords the unfortunate steward. From their discourse she ascertained that, having thrown a plank across the moat, and concealed themselves within the garden until they had reconnoitred the premises, they had contrived to gain admittance unperceived through the window of a small back room, in which they had surprised Heydocke, who had fallen asleep on his post, and captured him. One amongst their number, who appeared to act as leader, and whom, from his garb, and the white wand he carried, Viviana knew must be a pursuivant, now proceeded to interrogate the prisoner. To every

question proposed to him the steward shook his head; and, in spite of the threats of the examinant, and the blows of his followers, he persisted in maintaining silence.

"If we cannot make this contumacious rascal speak, we will find others more tractable," observed the pursuivant. "I will not leave any corner of the house unvisited; nor a soul within it unquestioned. Ah! here they come!"

As he spoke, several of the serving-men, with some of the female domestics, who had been alarmed by the noise, rushed into the hall, and on seeing it filled with armed men, were about to retreat, when they were instantly seized and detained. A scene of great confusion now ensued. The women screamed, and cried for mercy, while the men struggled and fought with their captors. Commanding silence at length, the pursuivant proclaimed in the King's name that whoever would guide him to the hiding-place of Father Oldcorne, a Jesuit priest, whom it was known, and could be proved, was harboured within the mansion, should receive a free pardon and reward; while those who screened

him, or connived at his concealment, were liable to fine, imprisonment, and even more severe punishment. Each servant was then questioned separately. But, though all were more or less rudely dealt with, no information could be elicited.

Meanwhile, Viviana was a prey to the most intolerable anxiety. Unable to reach Father Oldcorne without crossing the hall, which she did not dare to attempt, she gave him up for lost; her sole hope being that, on hearing the cries of the domestics, he would provide for his own safety. Her anxiety was still farther increased when the pursuivant, having exhausted his patience by fruitless interrogatories, and satisfied his malice by frightening two of the females into fits, departed with a portion of his band to search the house, leaving the rest as a guard over the prisoners.

Viviana then felt that, if she would save Father Oldcorne, the attempt must be made without a moment's delay, and at any hazard. Watching her opportunity, when the troopers were occupied, —some in helping themselves to such viands and

liquors as they could lay hands upon, — some in searching the persons of the prisoners for amulets and relics, — while others, more humane, were trying to revive the swooning women, she contrived to steal unperceived across the lower end of the hall. Having gained the passage, she found to her horror that the pursuivant and his band were already within the star-chamber. They were sounding the walls with hammers and mallets, and from their exclamations, she learnt that they had discovered the retreat behind the fire-place, and were about to break it open.

"We have him," roared the pursuivant, in a voice of triumph. "The old owl's roost is here!"

Viviana, who stood at the door, drew in her breath, expecting that the next moment would inform her that the priest was made captive. Instead of this, she was delighted to find, from the oaths of rage and disappointment uttered by the troopers, that he had eluded them.

"He must be in the house, at all events," growled the pursuivant; "nor is it long since he quitted his hiding-place, as this cushion proves.

We will not go away without him. And now, let us proceed to the upper chambers."

Hearing their footsteps approach, Viviana darted off, and quickly ascending the principal staircase, entered a long corridor. Uncertain what to do, she was about to proceed to her own chamber, and bar the door, when she felt her arm grasped by a man. With difficulty repressing a shriek, she strove to disengage herself, when a whisper told her it was the priest.

"Heaven be praised!" cried Viviana, "you are safe. How—how did you escape?"

"I flew up stairs on hearing the voices," replied Oldcorne. "But what has happened to the steward?"

"He is a prisoner," replied Viviana.

"All then is lost, unless you are acquainted with the secret panel he spoke of in the oratory." rejoined Oldcorne.

"Alas! father, I am wholly ignorant of it," she answered. "But, come with me into my chamber; they will not dare to invade it."

"I know not that," returned the priest, despairingly. "These sacrilegious villains would not respect the sanctity of the altar itself."

"They come!" cried Viviana, as lights were seen at the foot of the stairs. "Take my hand — this way, father."

They had scarcely gained the room, and fastened the door, when the pursuivant and his attendants appeared in the corridor. The officer, it would seem, had been well instructed where to search, or was sufficiently practised in his duty, for he proceeded at once to several hiding-places in the different chambers which he visited. In one room he detected a secret staircase in the wall, which he mounted, and discovered a small chapel built in the roof. Stripping it of its altar, its statue of the virgin, its crucifix, pix, chalice, and other consecrated vessels, he descended, and continued his search. Viviana's chamber was now the only one unvisited. Trying the door, and finding it locked, he tapped against it with his wand.

"Who knocks?" asked the maiden.

"A state-messenger," was the reply. "I demand entrance in the King's name."

"You cannot have it," she replied. "It is my sleeping-chamber."

"My duty allows me no alternative," re-

joined the pursuivant, harshly. "If you will not admit me quietly, I must use force."

"Do you know to whom you offer this rudeness?" returned Viviana. "I am the daughter of Sir William Radcliffe."

"I know it," replied the pursuivant; "but I am not exceeding my authority. I hold a warrant for your father's arrest. And, if he had not been from home, I should have carried him to prison along with the Jesuit priest, whom I suspect is concealed within your chamber. Open the door, I command you; and do not hinder me in the execution of my duty."

As no answer was returned to the application, the pursuivant commanded his men to burst open the door; and the order was promptly obeyed.

The chamber was empty.

On searching it, however, the pursuivant found a door concealed by the hangings of the bed. It was bolted on the other side, but speedily yielded to his efforts. Passing through it, he entered upon a narrow gallery, at the extremity of which his progress was stopped by another door, likewise fastened on the further side. On bursting it

open, he entered a small oratory, wainscoted with oak, and lighted by an oriel window filled with stained glass, through which the newly-risen moon was pouring its full radiance, and discovered the object of his search.

"Father Oldcorne, I arrest you as a Jesuit and a traitor," shouted the pursuivant, in a voice of exultation. "Seize him!" he added, calling to his men.

"You shall not take him," cried Viviana, clinging despairingly to the priest, who offered no resistance, but clasped a crucifix to his breast.

"Leave go your hold, young mistress," rejoined the pursuivant, grasping Oldcorne by the collar of his vestment, and dragging him along; "and rest thankful that I make you not, also, my prisoner."

"Take me; but spare him!—in mercy spare him!" shrieked Viviana.

"You solicit mercy from one who knows it not, daughter," observed the priest. "Lead on, sir. I am ready to attend you."

"Your destination is the New Fleet, father," retorted the pursuivant, in a tone of bitter

raillery; "unless you prefer the cell in Radcliffe Hall lately vacated by your saintly predecessor, Father Woodroofe."

"Help! help!" shrieked Viviana.

"You may spare your voice, fair lady," sneered the pursuivant. "No help is at hand. Your servants are all prisoners."

The words were scarcely uttered, when a sliding panel in the wall flew open, and Guy Fawkes, followed by Humphrey Chetham, and another personage, sprang through the aperture, and presented a petronel at the head of the pursuivant.

CHAPTER V.

CHAT MOSS.

THE pursuivant was taken so completely unawares by the sudden appearance of Guy Fawkes and his companions, that he made no attempt at resistance. Nor were his attendants less confounded. Before they recovered from their surprise, Humphrey Chetham seized Viviana in his arms, and darting through the panel, called to the priest to follow him. Father Oldcorne was about to comply, when one of the soldiers, grasping the surcingle at his waist, dragged him forcibly backwards. The next moment, however, he was set free by Guy Fawkes, who felling the man to the ground, and, interposing himself between the priest and the other soldier, enabled the former to make good his retreat. This done, he planted himself in front of the panel, and

with a petronel in each hand, menaced his opponents.

"Fly for your lives!" he shouted in a loud voice to the others. "Not a moment is to be lost. I have taken greater odds, and in a worse cause, and have not been worsted. Heed me not, I say. I will defend the passage till you are beyond reach of danger. Fly!—fly!"

"After them!" vociferated the pursuivant, stamping with rage and vexation; "after them instantly! Hew down that bold traitor. Show him no quarter. His life is forfeit to the king. Slay him as you would a dog!"

But the men, having no fire-arms, were so much intimidated by the fierce looks of Guy Fawkes, and the deadly weapons he pointed at their heads, that they hesitated to obey their leader's injunctions.

"Do you hear what I say to you, cravens?" roared the pursuivant. "Cut him down without mercy."

"They dare not move a footstep," rejoined Guy Fawkes, in a derisive tone.

"Recreants!" cried the pursuivant, foaming

with rage, "is my prey to be snatched from me at the very moment I have secured it, through your cowardice? Obey me instantly, or, as Heaven shall judge me, I will denounce you to my Lord Derby and the Commissioners as aiders and abettors in Father Oldcorne's escape! — and you well know what your punishment will be if I do so. What! — are you afraid of one man?"

"Our pikes are no match for his petronels," observed the foremost soldier, sullenly.

"They are not," rejoined Guy Fawkes; "and you will do well not to compel me to prove the truth of your assertion. As to you, Master Pursuivant," he continued, with a look so stern that the other quailed before it, "unwilling as I am to shed blood, I shall hold your life, if I am compelled to take it, but just retribution for the fate you have brought upon the unfortunate Elizabeth Orton."

"Ha!" exclaimed the pursuivant, starting. "I thought I recognized you. You are the soldier in the Spanish garb who saved that false prophetess from drowning."

"I saved her only for a more lingering death," rejoined Guy Fawkes.

"I know it," retorted the pursuivant. "I found her dead body when I visited her cell on my way hither, and gave orders to have it interred without coffin or shroud in that part of the burial-ground of the Collegiate Church in Manchester reserved for common felons."

"I know not what stays my hand," rejoined Guy Fawkes, fiercely. "But I am strongly tempted to give you a grave beside her."

"I will put your daring to the proof!" cried the pursuivant, snatching a pike from one of his followers, and brandishing it over his head. "Throw down your arms, or you die!"

"Back!" exclaimed Guy Fawkes, presenting a petronel at him, "or I lodge a bullet in your brain."

"Be advised by me, and rush not on certain destruction, good Master Pursuivant," said the foremost soldier, plucking his mantle. "I see by his bloodthirsty looks that the villian is in earnest."

"I hear footsteps," cried the other soldier; "our comrades are at hand."

"Then it is time for me to depart," cried Guy Fawkes, springing through the secret door, and closing it after him.

"Confusion!" exclaimed the pursuivant; "but he shall not escape. Break open the panel."

The order was promptly obeyed. The men battered the stout oak board, which was of great thickness, with their pikes, but it resisted every effort; nor was it until the arrival of a fresh band of soldiers with lights, mallets, chisels, and other implements suitable to the purpose, that it could be forced open. This accomplished, the pursuivant, commanding his attendants to follow him, dashed through the aperture. As they proceeded singly along the narrow passage, the roof became so low that they were compelled to adopt a stooping posture. In this manner they hurried on until their further progress was stopped by a massive stone door, which appeared to descend from above by some hidden contrivance, no trace of bolt or other fastening being discernible. The flag fitted closely in channels in the walls, and had all the appearance of solid masonry. After

examining this obstacle for a moment, the pursuivant was convinced that any attempt to move it would be impracticable, and muttering a deep execration, he gave the word to return.

"From the course it appears to take," he observed, "this passage must communicate with the garden,—perhaps with the further side of the moat. We may yet secure them, if we use despatch."

To return to the fugitives. On arriving at the point where the stone door was situated, which he discovered by the channels in the wall above-mentioned, Guy Fawkes searched for an iron ring, and, having found it, drew it towards him, and the ponderous flag slowly dropped into its place. He then groped his way cautiously along in the dark, until his foot encountered the top of a ladder, down which he crept, and landed on the floor of a damp deep vault. Having taken the precaution to remove the ladder, he hastened onwards for about fifty yards, when he came to a steep flight of stone steps, distinguishable by a feeble glimmer of light from above, and mounting them, emerged through an open trap-door into a small building situated at the western side

of the moat, where, to his surprise and disappointment, he found the other fugitives.

"How comes it you are here?" he exclaimed in a reproachful tone. "I kept the wolves at bay thus long, to enable you to make good your retreat."

"Miss Radcliffe is too weak to move," replied Humphrey Chetham; "and I could not persuade Father Oldcorne to leave her."

"I care not what becomes of me," said the priest. "The sooner my painful race is run the better. But I cannot—will not abandon my dear charge thus."

"Think not of me, father, I implore you," rejoined Viviana, who had sunk overpowered with terror and exhaustion. "I shall be better soon. Master Chetham, I am assured, will remain with me till our enemies have departed, and I will then return to the hall."

"Command me as you please, Miss Radcliffe," replied Humphrey Chetham. "You have but to express a wish to insure its fulfilment on my part."

"Oh! that you had suffered Mr. Catesby to

tarry with us till the morning, as he himself proposed, dear daughter," observed the priest, turning to Viviana.

"Has Catesby been here?" inquired Guy Fawkes, with a look of astonishment.

"He has," replied Oldcorne. "He came to warn us that the hall would be this night searched by the officers of state; and he also brought word that a warrant had been issued by the Privy Council for the arrest of Sir William Radcliffe."

"Where is he now?" demanded Fawkes, hastily.

"On the way to Chester, whither he departed in all haste, at Viviana's urgent request, to apprise her father of his danger," rejoined the priest.

"This is strange!" muttered Guy Fawkes. "Catesby here, and I not know it!"

"He had a secret motive for his visit, my son," whispered Oldcorne, significantly.

"So I conclude, father," replied Fawkes, in the same tone.

"Viviana Radcliffe," murmured Humphrey Chetham, in low and tender accents, "something

tells me that this moment will decide my future fate. Emboldened by the mysterious manner in which we have been brought together, and you, as it were, have been thrown upon my protection, I venture to declare the passion I have long indulged for you; — a passion which, though deep and fervent as ever agitated human bosom, has hitherto, from the difference of our rank, and yet more from the difference of our religious opinions, been without hope. What has just occurred, — added to the peril in which your worthy father stands, and the difficulties in which you yourself will necessarily be involved, — makes me cast aside all misgiving, and perhaps with too much presumption, but with a confident belief that the sincerity of my love renders me not wholly undeserving of your regard, earnestly solicit you to give me a husband's right to watch over and defend you."

Viviana was silent. But even by the imperfect light the young merchant could discern that her cheek was covered with blushes.

"Your answer?" he cried, taking her hand.

"You must take it from my lips, Master

Chetham, interposed the priest, "Viviana Radcliffe never can be yours."

"Be pleased to let her speak for herself, reverend sir," rejoined the young merchant, angrily.

"I represent her father, and have acquainted you with his determination," rejoined the priest. "Appeal to her, and she will confirm my words."

"Viviana, is this true?" asked Chetham. "Does your father object to your union with me?"

Viviana answered by a deep sigh, and gently withdrew her hand from the young merchant's grasp.

"Then there is no hope for me?" cried Chetham.

"Alas! no," replied Viviana; "nor for me — of earthly affection. I am already dead to the world."

"How so?" he asked.

"I am about to vow myself to Heaven," she answered.

"Viviana!" exclaimed the young man, throwing himself at her feet, "reflect! — oh! re-

flect, before you take this fatal — this irrevocable step."

"Rise, sir," interposed the priest, sternly; "you plead in vain. Sir William Radcliffe will never wed his daughter to a heretic. In his name I command you to desist from further solicitation."

"I obey," replied Chetham, rising.

"We lose time here," observed Guy Fawkes, who had been lost for a moment in reflection. "I will undertake to provide for your safety, father. But, what must be done with Viviana? She cannot be left here. And her return to the hall would be attended with danger."

"I will not return till the miscreants have quitted it," said Viviana.

"Their departure is uncertain," replied Fawkes. "When they are baulked of their prey they sometimes haunt a dwelling for weeks."

"What will become of me?" cried Viviana, distractedly.

"It were vain, I fear, to entreat you to accept an asylum with my father at Clayton Hall, or at my own residence at Crumpsall," said Humphrey Chetham.

"Your offer is most kind, sir," replied Oldcorne, "and is duly appreciated. But Viviana will see the propriety — on every account — of declining it."

"I do — I do," she acquiesced.

"Will you entrust yourself to my protection?" observed Fawkes.

"Willingly," replied the priest, answering for her. "We shall find some place of refuge," he added, turning to Viviana, "where your father can join us, and where we can remain concealed till this storm has blown over."

"I know many such," rejoined Fawkes, "both in this country, and in Yorkshire, and will guide you to one."

"My horses are at your service," said Humphrey Chetham. "They are tied beneath the trees in the avenue. My servant shall bring them to the door," and, turning to his attendant, he gave him directions to that effect. "I was riding hither an hour before midnight," he continued, addressing Viviana, "to offer you assistance, having accidentally heard the pursuivant mention his meditated visit to Ordsall Hall to

one of his followers, when, as I approached the gates, this person," pointing to Guy Fawkes, " crossed my path, and, seizing the bridle of my steed, demanded whether I was a friend to Sir William Radcliffe. I answered in the affirmative, and desired to know the motive of his inquiry. He then told me that the house was invested by a numerous band of armed men, who had crossed the moat by means of a plank, and were at that moment concealed within the garden. This intelligence, besides filling me with alarm, disconcerted all my plans, as I hoped to have been beforehand with them, — their inquisitorial searches being generally made at a late hour, when all the inmates of a house intended to be surprised are certain to have retired to rest. While I was bitterly reproaching myself for my dilatoriness, and considering what course it would be best to pursue, my servant, Martin Heydocke, — son to your father's old steward, — who had ridden up at the stranger's approach, informed me that he was acquainted with a secret passage communicating beneath the moat with the hall. Upon this, I dismounted; and fastening my horse

to a tree, ordered him to lead me to it without an instant's delay. The stranger, who gave his name as Guy Fawkes, and professed himself a stanch Catholic, and a friend of Father Oldcorne, begged permission to join us in a tone so earnest that I at once acceded to his request. We then proceeded to this building, and after some search discovered the trap-door. Much time was lost, owing to our being unprovided with lights, in the subterranean passage; and it was more than two hours before we could find the ring connected with the stone door, the mystery of which Martin explained to us. This delay we feared would render our scheme abortive, when, just as we reached the panel, we heard your shrieks. The spring was touched, and — you know the rest."

"And shall never forget it," replied Viviana, in a tone of the deepest gratitude.

At this juncture, the tramp of horses was heard at the door; and the next moment it was thrown open by the younger Heydocke, who, with a look, and in a voice of the utmost terror, exclaimed, "They are coming! — they are coming!"

"The pursuivant?" cried Guy Fawkes.

"Not him alone, but the whole gang," rejoined Martin. "Some of them are lowering the drawbridge, while others are crossing the plank. Several are on horseback, and I think I discern the pursuivant amongst the number. They have seen me, and are hurrying in this direction."

As he spoke a loud shout corroborated his statement.

"We are lost!" exclaimed Oldcorne.

"Do not despair, father," rejoined Guy Fawkes. "Heaven will not abandon its faithful servants. The Lord will deliver us out of the hands of these Amalekites."

"To horse, then, if you would indeed avoid them," urged Humphrey Chetham. "The shouts grow louder. Your enemies are fast approaching."

"Viviana," said Guy Fawkes, "are you willing to fly with us?"

"I will do anything rather than be left to those horrible men," she answered.

Guy Fawkes then raised her in his arms, and

sprang with his lovely burthen upon the nearest charger. His example was quickly followed by Humphrey Chetham, who, vaulting on the other horse, assisted the priest to mount behind him. While this took place, Martin Heydocke darted into the shed, and instantly bolted the door.

It was a beautiful moonlight night, almost as bright as day, and the movements of each party were fully revealed to the other. Guy Fawkes perceived at a glance that they were surrounded; and, though he had no fears for himself, he was full of apprehension for the safety of his companion. While he was debating with himself as to the course it would be best to pursue, Humphrey Chetham shouted to him to turn to the left, and started off in that direction. Grasping his fair charge, whom he had placed before him on the saddle, firmly with his left arm, and wrapping her in his ample cloak, Guy Fawkes drew his sword, and striking spurs into his steed, followed in the same track.

The little fabric which had afforded them temporary shelter, it has already been mentioned, was situated on the west of the hall, at a short dis-

tance from the moat, and was screened from observation by a small shrubbery. No sooner did the fugitives emerge from this cover than loud outcries were raised by their antagonists, and every effort was made to intercept them. On the right, galloping towards them on a light but swift courser, taken from Sir William Radcliffe's stables, came the pursuivant, attended by half-a-dozen troopers, who had accommodated themselves with horses in the same manner as their leader. Between them and the road leading to Manchester, were stationed several armed men on foot. At the rear, voices proclaimed that others were in full pursuit; while in front, a fourth detachment menaced them with their pikes. Thus beset on all sides, it seemed scarcely possible to escape. Nothing daunted, however, by the threats and vociferations with which they were received, the two horsemen boldly charged this party. The encounter was instantaneous. Guy Fawkes warded off a blow, which, if it had taken effect, must have robbed Viviana of life, and struck down the fellow who aimed it. At the same moment, his career was checked by another

assailant, who, catching his bridle with the hook of his pike, commanded him to surrender. Fawkes replied by cleaving the man's staff asunder, and, having thus disembarrassed himself, was about to pursue his course, when he perceived that Humphrey Chetham was in imminent danger from a couple of soldiers who had stopped him, and were trying to unhorse his companion. Riding up to them, Guy Fawkes, by a vigorous and well-directed attack, speedily drove them off; and the fugitives, being now unimpeded, were enabled to continue their career.

The foregoing occurrences were witnessed by the pursuivant with the utmost rage and vexation. Pouring forth a torrent of threats and imprecations, he swore he would never rest till he had secured them, and urging his courser to its utmost speed commanded his men to give chase.

Skirting a sluice, communicating between the Irwell and the moat, Humphrey Chetham, who, as better acquainted with the country than his companions, took the lead, proceeded along its edge for about a hundred yards, when he sud-

denly struck across a narrow bridge covered with sod, and entered the open fields. Hitherto Viviana had remained silent. Though fully aware of the risk she had run, she gave no sign of alarm, —not even when the blow was aimed against her life; and it was only on conceiving the danger in some degree passed that she ventured to express her gratitude.

"You have displayed so much courage," said Guy Fawkes, in answer to her speech, "that it would be unpardonable to deceive you. Our foes are too near us, and too well mounted, to make it by any means certain we shall escape them,—unless by stratagem."

"They are within a hundred yards of us," cried Humphrey Chetham, glancing fearfully backwards. "They have possessed themselves of your father's fleetest horses; and, if I mistake not, the rascally pursuivant has secured your favourite barb."

"My gentle Zayda!" exclaimed Viviana. "Then indeed we are lost. She has not her match for speed"

"If she bring her rider to us alone, she will

do us good service," observed Guy Fawkes, significantly.

The same notion, almost at the same moment, occurred to the pursuivant. Having witnessed the prowess displayed by Guy Fawkes in his recent attack on the soldiers, he felt no disposition to encounter so formidable an opponent single-handed; and finding that the high-mettled barb on which he was mounted, by its superior speed and fiery temper, would inevitably place him in such a dilemma, he prudently resolved to halt, and exchange it for a more manageable steed.

This delay was of great service to the fugitives, and enabled them to get considerably ahead. They had now gained a narrow lane, and, tracking it, speedily reached the rocky banks of the Irwell. Galloping along a foot-path that followed the serpentine course of the stream for a quarter of a mile, they arrived at a spot marked by a bed of osiers, where Humphrey Chetham informed them there was a ford.

Accordingly, they plunged into the river, and while stemming the current, which here ran with

great swiftness, and rose up above the saddles, the neighing of a steed was heard from the bank they had quitted. Turning at the sound, Viviana beheld her favourite courser on the summit of a high rock. The soldier to whom Zayda was intrusted had speedily, as the pursuivant foresaw, distanced his companions, and chose this elevated position to take sure aim at Guy Fawkes, against whom he was now levelling a caliver. The next moment a bullet struck against his brigandine, but without doing him any injury. The soldier, however, did not escape so lightly. Startled by the discharge, the fiery barb leaped from the precipice into the river, and throwing her rider, who was borne off by the rapid stream, swam towards the opposite bank, which she reached just as the others were landing. At the sound of her mistress's voice she stood still, and allowed Humphrey Chetham to lay hold of her bridle; and Viviana declaring she was able to mount her, Guy Fawkes, who felt that such an arrangement was most likely to conduce to her safety, and who was, moreover, inclined to view the occurrence as a providential interference in

their behalf, immediately assisted her into the saddle.

Before this transfer could be effected, the pursuivant and his attendants had begun to ford the stream. The former had witnessed the accident that had befallen the soldier from a short distance; and, while he affected to deplore it, internally congratulated himself on his prudence and foresight. But he was by no means so well satisfied when he saw how it served to benefit the fugitives.

"That unlucky beast!" he exclaimed. "Some fiend must have prompted me to bring her out of the stable. Would she had drowned herself instead of poor Dickon Duckesbury, whom she hath sent to feed the fishes! With her aid, Miss Radcliffe will doubtless escape. No matter. If I secure Father Oldcorne, and that black-visaged trooper in the Spanish garb, who, I 'll be sworn, is a secret intelligencer of the pope, if not of the devil, I shall be well contented. I 'll hang them both on a gibbet higher than Haman's."

And muttering other threats to the same effect,

he picked his way to the opposite shore. Long before he reached it, the fugitives had disappeared; but on climbing the bank, he beheld them galloping swiftly across a well-wooded district steeped in moonlight, and spread out before his view, and inflamed by the sight he shouted to his attendants, and once more started in pursuit.

Cheered by the fortunate incident above related, which, in presenting her with her own steed in a manner so surprising and unexpected, seemed almost to give her assurance of deliverance, Viviana, inspirited by the exercise, felt her strength and spirits rapidly revive. At her side rode Guy Fawkes, who ever and anon cast an anxious look behind, to ascertain the distance of their pursuers, but suffered no exclamation to escape his lips. Indeed, throughout the whole affair, he maintained the reserve belonging to his sombre and taciturn character, and neither questioned Humphrey Chetham as to where he was leading them, nor proposed any deviation from the route he had apparently chosen. To such remarks as were addressed to him, Fawkes an-

swered in monosyllables; and it was only when occasion required, that he volunteered any observation or advice. He seemed to surrender himself to chance. And perhaps, if his bosom could have been examined, it would have been found that he considered himself a mere puppet in the hands of destiny.

In other and calmer seasons, he might have dwelt with rapture on the beautiful and varied country through which they were speeding, and which from every knoll they mounted, every slope they descended, every glade they threaded, intricacy pierced, or tangled dell tracked, presented new and increasing attractions. This charming district, since formed into a park by the Traffords, from whom it derives its present designation, was at this time,—though part of the domain of that ancient family,—wholly unenclosed. Old Trafford Hall lies (for it is still in existence,) more than a mile nearer to Manchester, a little to the east of Ordsall Hall; but the modern residence of the family is situated in the midst of the lovely region through which the fugitives were riding.

But, though the charms of the scene, heightened by the gentle medium through which they were viewed, produced little effect upon the iron nature of Guy Fawkes, they were not without influence on his companions, especially Viviana. Soothed by the stillness of all around her, she almost forgot her danger; and surrendering herself to the dreamy enjoyment generally experienced in contemplating such a scene at such an hour, suffered her gaze to wander over the fair woody landscape before her, till it was lost in the distant moonlit wolds.

From the train of thought naturally awakened by this spectacle, she was roused by the shouts of the pursuers; and, glancing timorously behind her, beheld them hurrying swiftly along the valley they had just quitted. From the rapidity with which they were advancing, it was evident they were gaining upon them, and she was about to urge her courser to greater speed, when Humphrey Chetham laid his hand upon the rein to check her.

"Reserve yourself till we gain the brow of this hill," he remarked; "and then put Zayda to

her mettle. We are not far from our destination."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Viviana. "Where is it?"

"I will show it to you presently," he answered.

Arrived at the summit of the high ground, which they had been for some time gradually ascending, the young merchant pointed out a vast boggy tract, about two miles off, in the vale beneath them.

"That is our destination," he said.

"Did I not hold it impossible you could trifle with me at such a time as this, I should say you were jesting," rejoined Viviana. "The place you indicate, unless I mistake you, is Chat Moss, the largest and most dangerous marsh in Lancashire."

"You do not mistake me, neither am I jesting, Viviana," replied the young merchant, gravely. "Chat Moss *is* the mark at which I aim."

"If we are to cross it, we shall need a Will-o'-the-wisp to guide us, and some friendly elf to make firm the ground beneath our steeds," rejoined Viviana, in a slightly-sarcastic tone.

"Trust to me and you shall traverse it in safety," resumed Humphrey Chetham.

"I would sooner trust myself to the pursuivant and his band, than venture upon its treacherous surface," she replied.

"How is this, young sir?" interposed Guy Fawkes, sternly. "Is it from heedlessness or rashness that you are about to expose us to this new danger?—which, if Viviana judges correctly, and my own experience of such places inclines me to think she does so,—is greater than that which now besets us."

"If there is any danger I shall be the first to encounter it, for I propose to act as your guide," returned Humphrey Chetham, in an offended tone. "But the treacherous character of the marsh constitutes our safety. I am acquainted with a narrow path across it, from which the deviation of a foot will bring certain death. If our pursuers attempt to follow us their destruction is inevitable. Viviana may rest assured I would not needlessly expose so dear a life as hers. But it is our best chance of safety."

"Humphrey Chetham is in the right," ob-

served the priest. "I have heard of the path he describes; and if he can guide us along it, we shall effectually baffle our enemies."

"I cry you mercy, sir," said Viviana. "I did not apprehend your meaning. But I now thankfully resign myself to your care."

"Forward, then," cried the young merchant. And they dashed swiftly down the declivity.

Chat Moss, towards which they were hastening, though now drained, in part cultivated, and traversed by the busiest and most-frequented railroad in England, or the world, was, within the recollection of many of the youngest of the present generation, a dreary and almost impassable waste. Surveyed from the heights of Dunham, whence the writer has often gazed upon it, envying the plover her wing to skim over its broad expanse, it presented with its black boggy soil, striped like a motley garment, with patches of grey, tawny, and dunnish red, a singular and mysterious appearance. Conjecture fixes this morass as the site of a vast forest, whose immemorial and Druid-haunted groves were burnt by the Roman invaders; and seeks to account for its

present condition by supposing that the charred trees—still frequently found within its depths —being left where the conflagration had placed them, had choked up its brooks and springs, and so reduced it to a general swamp. Drayton, however, in the following lines from the Faerie Land, places its origin as far back as the Deluge :—

> ———Great Chat Moss at my fall
> Lies full of turf and marl, her unctuous mineral ;
> And blocks as black as pitch, with boring augers found,
> There at the General Flood supposed to be drown'd.

But the former hypothesis appears the more probable. A curious description of Chat Moss, as it appeared at the time of this history, is furnished by Camden, who terms it, "a swampy tract of great extent, a considerable part of which was carried off in the last age by swollen rivers with great danger, whereby the rivers were infected, and great quantities of fish died. Instead thereof is now a valley watered by a small stream ; and many trees were discovered thrown down, and lying flat, so that one may suppose when the ground lay neglected, and the waste water of

brooks was not drained off into the open valleys, or their courses stopped by neglect or desolation, all the lower grounds were turned into swamps, (which we call *mosses*,) or into pools. If this was the case, no wonder so many trees are found covered, and, as it were, buried in such places all over England, but especially here. For the roots being loosened by too excessive wet, they must necessarily fall down and sink in so soft a soil. The people hereabouts search for them with poles and spits, and after marking the place, dig them up and use them for firing, for they are like torches, equally fit to burn and to give light, which is probably owing to the bituminous earth that surrounds them, whence the common people suppose them firs, though Cæsar denies that there were such trees in Britain."

But, though vast masses of the bog had been carried off by the Irwell and the Mersey, as related by Camden, the general appearance of the waste,—with the exception of the valley and the small stream,—was much the same as it continued to our own time. Its surface was more

broken and irregular, and black gaping chasms and pits filled with water and slime as dark-coloured as the turf whence it flowed, pointed out the spots where the swollen and heaving swamp had burst its bondage. Narrow paths, known only to the poor turf-cutters and other labourers who dwelt upon its borders, and gathered fuel with poles and spits in the manner above described, intersected it at various points. But as they led in many cases to dangerous and deep gulfs, to dismal quagmires and fathomless pits; and, moreover, as the slightest departure from the proper track would have whelmed the traveller in an oozy bed, from which, as from a quicksand, he would have vainly striven to extricate himself, — it was never crossed without a guide, except by those familiar with its perilous courses. One painful circumstance connected with the history of Chat Moss remains to be recorded, namely, that the attempt made to cultivate it by the great historian Roscoe, — an attempt since carried out, as has already been shown, with complete success, — ended in a result ruinous to

the fortunes of that highly-gifted person, who, up to the period of this luckless undertaking, was as prosperous as he was meritorious.

By this time the fugitives had approached the confines of the marsh. An accident, however, had just occurred, which nearly proved fatal to Viviana, and, owing to the delay it occasioned, brought their pursuers into dangerous proximity with them. In fording the Irwell, which, from its devious course, they were again compelled to cross, about a quarter of a mile below Barton, her horse missed its footing, and precipitated her into the rapid current. In another instant, she would have been borne away, if Guy Fawkes had not flung himself into the water, and seized her before she sank. Her affrighted steed, having got out of its depth, began to swim off, and it required the utmost exertion on the part of Humphrey Chetham, embarrassed as he was by the priest, to secure it. In a few minutes all was set to rights, and Viviana was once more placed on the saddle, without having sustained further inconvenience than was

occasioned by her dripping apparel. But those few minutes, as has been just stated, sufficed to bring the pursuivant and his men close upon them; and as they scrambled up the opposite bank, the plunging and shouting behind them told that the latter had entered the stream.

"Yonder is Baysnape," exclaimed Humphrey Chetham, calling Viviana's attention to a ridge of high ground on the borders of the waste. "Below it lies the path by which I propose to enter the moss. We shall speedily be out of the reach of our enemies."

"The marsh at least will hide us," answered Viviana, with a shudder. "It is a terrible alternative."

"Fear nothing, dear daughter," observed the priest. "The saints, who have thus marvellously protected us, will continue to watch over us to the end, and will make the path over yon perilous waste as safe as the ground on which we tread."

"I like not the appearance of the sky," observed Guy Fawkes, looking uneasily upwards.

"Before we reach the spot you have pointed out, the moon will be obscured. Will it be safe to traverse the moss in the dark?"

"It is our only chance," replied the young merchant, speaking in a low tone, that his answer might not reach Viviana's ears; "and after all, the darkness may be serviceable. Our pursuers are so near, that if it were less gloomy, they might hit upon the right track. It will be a risk to us to proceed, but certain destruction to those who follow. And now let us make what haste we can. Every moment is precious."

The dreary and fast darkening waste had now opened upon them in all its horrors. Far as the gaze could reach appeared an immense expanse, flat almost as the surface of the ocean, and unmarked, so far as could be discerned in that doubtful light, by any trace of human footstep or habitation. It was a stern and sombre prospect, and calculated to inspire terror in the stoutest bosom. What effect it produced on Viviana may be easily conjectured. But her nature was brave and enduring, and, though she trembled so violently as scarcely to be able to

keep her seat, she gave no utterance to her fears. They were now skirting that part of the morass, since denominated, from the unfortunate speculation previously alluded to, "Roscoe's Improvements." This tract was the worst and most dangerous portion of the whole moss. Soft, slabby, and unsubstantial, its treacherous beds scarcely offered secure footing to the heron that alighted on them. The ground shook beneath the fugitives as they hurried past the edge of the groaning and quivering marsh. The plover, scared from its nest, uttered its peculiar and plaintive cry; the bittern shrieked; other night-fowl poured forth their doleful notes; and the bull-frog added its deep croak to the ominous concert. Behind them came the thundering tramp and loud shouts of their pursuers. Guy Fawkes had judged correctly. Before they reached Baysnape the moon had withdrawn behind a rack of clouds, and it had become profoundly dark. Arrived at this point, Humphrey Chetham called to them to turn off to the right.

"Follow singly," he said, "and do not swerve a hair's breadth from the path. The slightest

deviation will be fatal. Do you, sir," he added to the priest, "mount behind Guy Fawkes, and let Viviana come next after me. If I should miss my way, do not stir for your life."

The transfer effected, the fugitives turned off to the right, and proceeded at a cautious pace along a narrow and shaking path. The ground trembled so much beneath them, and their horses' feet sank so deeply in the plashy bog, that Viviana demanded, in a tone of some uneasiness, if he was sure he had taken the right course?

"If I had not," replied Humphrey Chetham, "we should ere this have found our way to the bottom of the morass."

As he spoke, a floundering plunge, accompanied by a horrible and quickly-stifled cry, told that one of their pursuers had perished in endeavouring to follow them.

"The poor wretch is gone to his account," observed Viviana, in a tone of commiseration. "Have a care! — have a care, lest you share the same fate."

"If I can save you, I care not what becomes of me," replied the young merchant. "Since

I can never hope to possess you, life has become valueless in my eyes."

"Quicken your pace," shouted Guy Fawkes, who brought up the rear. "Our pursuers have discovered the track, and are making towards us."

"Let them do so," replied the young merchant. "They can do us no farther injury."

"That is false!" cried the voice of a soldier from behind. And as the words were uttered a shot was fired, which, though aimed against Chetham, took effect upon his steed. The animal staggered, and his rider had only time to slide from his back when he reeled off the path, and was ingulfed in the marsh.

Hearing the plunge of the steed, the man fancied he had hit his mark, and hallooed in an exulting voice to his companions. But his triumph was of short duration. A ball from the petronel of Guy Fawkes pierced his brain, and dropping from his saddle, he sank, together with his horse, which he dragged along with him into the quagmire.

"Waste no more shot," cried Humphrey Chetham; "the swamp will fight our battles

for us. Though I grieve for the loss of my horse, I may be better able to guide you on foot."

With this, he seized Viviana's bridle, and drew her steed along at a quick pace, but with the greatest caution. As they proceeded, a light like that of a lantern was seen to rise from the earth, and approach them.

"Heaven be praised!" exclaimed Viviana: "some one has heard us, and is hastening to our assistance."

"Not so," replied Humphrey Chetham. "The light you behold is an *ignis fatuus*. Were you to trust yourself to its delusive gleam, it would lead you to the most dangerous parts of the moss."

And, as if to exhibit its real character, the little flame, which hitherto had burnt as brightly and steadily as a wax-candle, suddenly appeared to dilate, and assuming a purple tinge emitted a shower of sparks, and then flitted rapidly over the plain.

"Woe to him that follows it!" cried Humphrey Chetham.

"It has a strange unearthly look," observed Viviana, crossing herself. "I have much difficulty in persuading myself it is not the work of some malignant sprite."

"It is only an exhalation of the marsh," replied Chetham. "But, see! others are at hand."

Their approach, indeed, seemed to have disturbed all the weird children of the waste. Lights were seen trooping towards them in every direction; sometimes stopping, sometimes rising in the air, now contracting, now expanding, and when within a few yards of the travellers, retreating with inconceivable swiftness.

"It is a marvellous and incomprehensible spectacle," remarked Viviana.

"The common folk hereabouts affirm that these Jack-o'-lanterns, as they term them, always appear in greater numbers when some direful catastrophe is about to take place," rejoined the young merchant.

"Heaven avert it from us," ejaculated Viviana.

"It is an idle superstition," returned Chetham. "But we must now keep silence," he continued, lowering his voice, and stopping near

the charred stump of a tree, left, it would seem, as a mark. "The road turns here; and, unless our pursuers know it, we shall now quit them for ever. We must not let a sound betray the course we are about to take."

Having turned this dangerous corner in safety, and conducted his companions as noiselessly as possible for a few yards along the cross path, which being much narrower was consequently more perilous than the first, Humphrey Chetham stood still, and, imposing silence upon the others, listened to the approach of their pursuers. His prediction was speedily and terribly verified. Hearing the movement in advance, but unable to discover the course taken by the fugitives, the unfortunate soldiers, fearful of losing their prey, quickened their pace, in the expectation of instantly overtaking them. They were fatally undeceived. Four only of their number, besides their leader, remained,—two having perished in the manner heretofore described. The first of these, disregarding the caution of his comrade, laughingly urged his horse into a gallop, and, on passing the mark, sunk as if by magic, and

before he could utter a single warning cry, into the depths of the morass. His disappearance was so instantaneous, that the next in order, though he heard the sullen plunge, was unable to draw in the rein, and was likewise ingulfed. A third followed ; and a fourth, in his efforts to avoid their fate, backed his steed over the slippery edge of the path. Only one now remained. It was the pursuivant, who, with the prudence that characterised all his proceedings, had followed in the rear. He was so dreadfully frightened, that, adding his shrieks to those of his attendants, he shouted to the fugitives, imploring assistance in the most piteous terms, and promising never again to molest them, if they would guide him to a place of safety. But his cries were wholly unheeded ; and he perhaps endured in those few minutes of agony as much suffering as he had inflicted on the numerous victims of his barbarity. It was indeed an appalling moment. Three of the wretched men had not yet sunk, but were floundering about in the swamp, and shrieking for help. The horses, as much terrified as their riders, added

their piercing cries to the half-suffocated yells. And, as if to make the scene more ghastly, myriads of dancing lights flitted towards them, and throwing an unearthly glimmer over this part of the morass, fully revealed their struggling figures. Moved by compassion for the poor wretches, Viviana implored Humphrey Chetham to assist them, and, finding him immovable, she appealed to Guy Fawkes.

"They are beyond all human aid," the latter replied.

"Heaven have mercy on their souls!" ejaculated the priest. "Pray for them, dear daughter. Pray heartily, as I am about to do." And he recited in an audible voice the Romish formula of supplication for those *in extremis*.

Averting her gaze from the spectacle, Viviana joined fervently in the prayer.

By this time two of the strugglers had disappeared. The third, having freed himself from his horse, contrived for some moments, during which he uttered the most frightful cries, to keep his head above the swamp. His efforts were tremendous, but unavailing, and served

only to accelerate his fate. Making a last desperate plunge towards the bank where the fugitives were standing, he sank above the chin. The expression of his face, shown by the ghastly glimmer of the fen-fires, as he was gradually swallowed up, was horrible.

"*Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine,*" exclaimed the priest.

"All is over," cried Humphrey Chetham, taking the bridle of Viviana's steed, and leading her onwards. "We are free from our pursuers."

"There is one left," she rejoined, casting a look backwards.

"It is the pursuivant," returned Guy Fawkes, sternly. "He is within shot," he added, drawing his petronel.

"Oh, no—no!—in pity spare him!" cried Viviana. "Too many lives have been sacrificed already."

"He is the cause of all the mischief," answered Guy Fawkes, unwillingly replacing the petronel in his belt, "and may live to injure you and your father."

"I will hope not," rejoined Viviana; "but, spare him!—oh, spare him!"

"Be it as you please," replied Guy Fawkes. "The marsh, I trust, will not be so merciful."

With this, they slowly resumed their progress. On hearing their departure, the pursuivant renewed his cries in a more piteous tone than ever; but, in spite of the entreaties of Viviana, nothing could induce her companions to lend him assistance.

For some time they proceeded in silence, and without accident. As they advanced, the difficulties of the path increased, and it was fortunate that the moon, emerging from the clouds in which, up to this moment, she had been shrouded, enabled them to steer their course in safety. At length, after a tedious and toilsome march for nearly half a mile, the footing became more secure, the road widened, and they were able to quicken their pace. Another half mile landed them upon the western bank of the morass. Viviana's first impulse was to give thanks to Heaven for their deliverance, nor did

she omit in her prayer a supplication for the unfortunate beings who had perished.

Arrived at the point now known as Rawson Nook, they entered a lane, and proceeded towards Astley Green, where perceiving a cluster of thatched cottages among the trees, they knocked at the door of the first, and speedily obtained admittance from its inmates, a turf-cutter and his wife. The man conveyed their steeds to a neighbouring barn, while the good dame offered Viviana such accommodation and refreshment as her humble dwelling afforded. Here they tarried till the following evening, as much to recruit Miss Radcliffe's strength, as for security.

At the young merchant's request, the turf-cutter went in the course of the day to see what had become of the pursuivant. He was nowhere to be found. But he accidentally learned from another hind, who followed the same occupation as himself, that a person answering to the officer's description had been seen to emerge from the moss near Baysnape at daybreak, and take the road towards Manchester. Of the unfortunate soldiers nothing but a steel cap and a pike, which

the man brought away with him, could be discovered.

After much debate, it was decided that their safest plan would be to proceed to Manchester, where Humphrey Chetham undertook to procure them safe lodgings at the Seven Stars, — an excellent hostel, kept by a worthy widow, who, he affirmed, would do anything to serve him. Accordingly, they set out at night-fall, — Viviana taking her place before Guy Fawkes, and relinquishing Zayda to the young merchant and the priest. Shaping their course through Worsley, by Monton Green and Pendleton, they arrived in about an hour within sight of the town, which then,—not a tithe of its present size, and unpolluted by the smoky atmosphere in which it is now constantly enveloped,—was not without some pretensions to a picturesque appearance. Crossing Salford Bridge, they mounted Smithy Bank, as it was then termed, and proceeding along Cateaton Street and Hanging Ditch, struck into Whithing (now Withy) Grove, at the right of which, just where a few houses were beginning to straggle up Shude Hill, stood, and still stands,

the comfortable hostel of the Seven Stars. Here they stopped, and were warmly welcomed by its buxom mistress, Dame Sutcliffe. Muffled in Guy Fawkes's cloak, the priest gained the chamber to which he was ushered unobserved. And Dame Sutcliffe, though her Protestant notions were a little scandalized at her dwelling being made the sanctuary of a Popish priest, promised, at the instance of Master Chetham, whom she knew to be no favourer of idolatry in a general way, to be answerable for his safety.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DISINTERMENT.

HAVING seen every attention shown to Viviana by the hostess,—who, as soon as she discovered that she had the daughter of Sir William Radcliffe of Ordsall, under her roof, bestirred herself in right earnest for her accommodation,—Humphrey Chetham, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour,—it was past midnight,—expressed his determination to walk to his residence at Crumpsall, to put an end to any apprehension which might be entertained by the household at his prolonged absence.

With this view, he set forth; and Guy Fawkes, who seemed to be meditating some project which he was unwilling to disclose to the others, quitted the hostel with him, bidding the

chamberlain sit up for him, as he should speedily return. They had not gone far when he inquired the nearest way to the Collegiate Church, and was answered that they were then proceeding towards it, and in a few moments should arrive at its walls. He next asked the young merchant whether he could inform him which part of the churchyard was allotted to criminals. Humphrey Chetham, somewhat surprised by the question, replied, "At the north-west, near the charnel;" adding, "I shall pass within a short distance of the spot, and will point it out to you."

Entering Fennel Street, at the end of which stood an ancient cross, they soon came in sight of the church. The moon was shining brightly, and silvered the massive square tower of the fane, the battlements, pinnacles, buttresses, and noble eastern window, with its gorgeous tracery. While Guy Fawkes paused for a moment to contemplate this reverend and beautiful structure, two venerable personages, having long snowy beards, and wrapped in flowing mantles edged with sable fur, passed the end of the street. One of them carried a lantern, though it was wholly needless, as

it was bright as day; and as they glided stealthily along, there was something so mysterious in their manner, that it greatly excited the curiosity of Guy Fawkes, who inquired from his companion if he knew who they were.

"The foremost is the warden of Manchester, the famous Doctor Dee," replied Humphrey Chetham, "divine, mathematician, astrologer,—and, if report speaks truly, conjuror."

"Is that Doctor Dee?" cried Guy Fawkes, in astonishment.

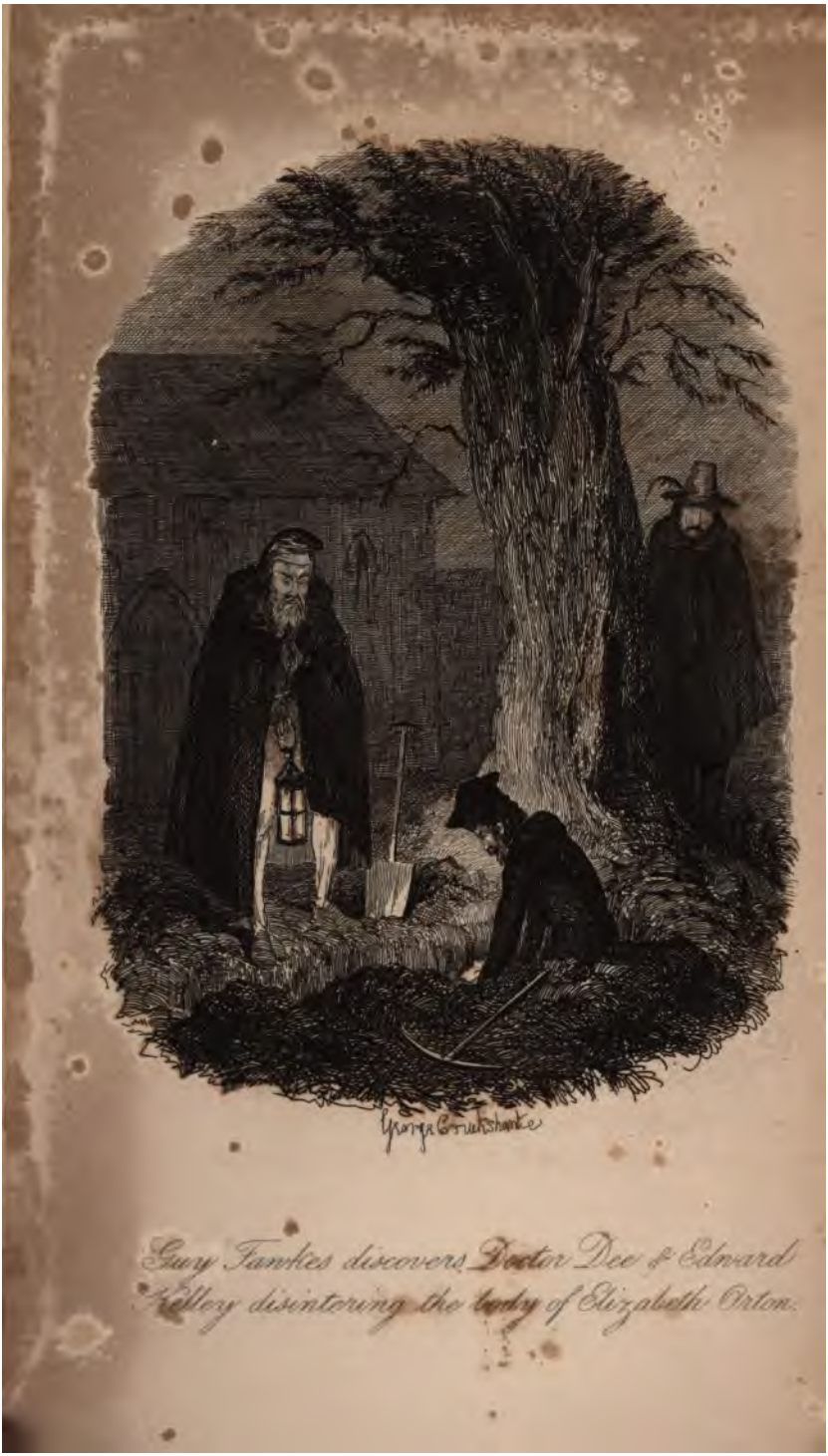
"It is," replied the young merchant; "and the other in the Polish cap is the no-less celebrated Edward Kelley, the doctor's assistant, or, as he is ordinarily termed, his seer."

"They have entered the churchyard," remarked Guy Fawkes. "I will follow them."

"I would not advise you to do so," rejoined the other. "Strange tales are told of them. You may witness that it is not safe to look upon."

The caution, however, was unheeded. Guy Fawkes had already disappeared, and the young





Guy Fawkes discovers Doctor Dee & Edward Kelley disintering the body of Elizabeth Orton.

merchant, shrugging his shoulders, proceeded on his way towards Hunt's Bank.

On gaining the churchyard, Guy Fawkes perceived the warden and his companion creeping stealthily beneath the shadow of a wall in the direction of a low fabric, which appeared to be a bone-house, or charnel, situated at the north-western extremity of the church. Before this building grew a black and stunted yew-tree. Arrived at it, they paused, and looked round to see whether they were observed. They did not, however, notice Guy Fawkes, who had concealed himself behind a buttress. Kelley then unlocked the door of the charnel, and brought out a pickaxe and mattock. Having divested himself of his cloak, he proceeded to shovel out the mould from a new-made grave at a little distance from the building. Doctor Dee stood by, and held the lantern for his assistant.

Determined to watch their proceedings, Guy Fawkes crept towards the yew-tree, behind which he ensconced himself. Kelley, meanwhile, continued to ply his spade with a vigour that seemed

almost incomprehensible in one so far stricken in years, and of such infirm appearance. At length he paused, and kneeling within the shallow grave, endeavoured to drag something from it. Doctor Dee knelt to assist him. After some exertion, they drew forth the corpse of a female, which had been interred without coffin, and apparently in the habiliments worn during life. A horrible suspicion crossed Guy Fawkes. Resolving to satisfy his doubts at once, he rushed forward, and beheld in the ghastly lineaments of the dead the features of the unfortunate prophetess, Elizabeth Orton.

CHAPTER VII.

DOCTOR DEE.

"How now, ye impious violators of the tomb! ye worse than famine-stricken wolves, that rake up the dead in churchyards!" cried Guy Fawkes, in a voice of thunder, to Doctor Dee and his companion; who, startled by his sudden appearance, dropped the body, and retreated to a short distance. "What devilish rites are ye about to enact, that ye thus profane the sanctity of the grave?"

"And who art thou that darest thus to interrupt us?" demanded Dee, sternly.

"It matters not," rejoined Fawkes, striding towards them. "Suffice it you are both known to *me*. You, John Dee, warden of Manchester, who deserve to be burnt at the stake for your

damnable practices, rather than hold the sacred office you fill; and you, Edward Kelley, his associate, who boast of familiar intercourse with demons, and, unless fame belies you, have purchased the intimacy at the price of your soul's salvation. I know you both. I know, also, whose body you have disinterred,—it is that of the ill-fated prophetess, Elizabeth Orton. And, if you do not instantly restore it to the grave whence you have snatched it, I will denounce you to the authorities of the town."

"Knowing thus much, you should know still more," retorted Doctor Dee, "namely, that I am not to be lightly provoked. You have no power to quit the churchyard—nay, not so much as to move a limb without my permission."

As he spoke, he drew from beneath his cloak a small phial, the contents of which he sprinkled over the intruder. Its effect was wonderful and instantaneous. The limbs of Guy Fawkes stiffened where he stood. His hand remained immovably fixed upon the pommel of his sword, and he seemed transformed into a marble statue.

"You will henceforth acknowledge and respect

my power," he continued. "Were it my pleasure, I could bury you twenty fathoms deep in the earth beneath our feet; or, by invoking certain spirits, convey you to the summit of yon lofty tower," pointing to the church, "and hurl you from it headlong. But I content myself with depriving you of motion, and leave you in possession of sight and speech, that you may endure the torture of witnessing what you cannot prevent."

So saying, he was about to return to the corpse with Kelley, when Guy Fawkes exclaimed in a hollow voice,

"Set me free, and I will instantly depart."

"Will you swear never to divulge what you have seen?" demanded Dee, pausing.

"Solemnly," he replied.

"I will trust you, then," rejoined the Doctor; —"the rather that your presence interferes with my purpose."

Taking a handful of loose earth from an adjoining grave, and muttering a few words, that sounded like a charm, he scattered it over Fawkes. The spell was instantly broken. A leaden weight

seemed to be removed from his limbs. His joints regained their suppleness, and with a convulsive start, like that by which a dreamer casts off a nightmare, he was liberated from his preternatural thraldom.

"And now, begone!" cried Doctor Dee, authoritatively.

"Suffer me to tarry with you a few moments," said Guy Fawkes, in a deferential tone. "Heretofore, I will freely admit, I regarded you as an impostor; but now I am convinced you are deeply skilled in the occult sciences, and would fain consult you on the future."

"I have already said that your presence troubles me," replied Doctor Dee. "But if you will call upon me at the College to-morrow, it may be I will give you further proofs of my skill."

"Why not now, reverend sir?" urged Fawkes. "The question I would ask is better suited to this dismal spot and witching hour, than to daylight and the walls of your study."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Dee. "Your name?"

"Guy Fawkes," replied the other.

"Guy Fawkes!" echoed the Doctor, starting.

"Nay, then, I guess the nature of the question you would ask."

"Am I then known to you, reverend sir?" inquired Fawkes, uneasily.

"As well as to yourself—nay, better," answered the Doctor. "Bring the lantern hither, Kelley," he continued, addressing his companion. "Look!" he added, elevating the light so as to throw it upon the countenance of Fawkes: "it is the very face, — the bronzed and strongly-marked features,—the fierce black eye,—the iron frame, and foreign garb of the figure we beheld in the show-stone."

"It is," replied Kelley. "I could have singled him out amid a thousand. He looked thus as we tracked his perilous course, with his three companions, the priest, Chetham, and Viviana Radcliffe, across Chat Moss."

"How have you learned this?" cried Guy Fawkes, in amazement.

"By the art that reveals all things," answered Kelley.

"In proof that your thoughts are known to me," observed Dee, "I will tell you the inquiry

you would make before it is uttered. You would learn whether the enterprise on which you are engaged will succeed."

"I would," replied Fawkes.

"Yet more," continued Dee. "I am aware of the nature of the plot, and could name to you all connected with it."

"Your power is, indeed, wonderful," rejoined Fawkes in an altered tone. "But will you give me the information I require?"

"Hum!" muttered Dee.

"I am too poor to purchase it," proceeded Fawkes, "unless a relic I have brought from Spain has any value in your eyes."

"Tush!" exclaimed Dee, angrily. "Do you suppose I am a common juggler, and practise my art for gain?"

"By no means, reverend sir," said Fawkes. "But I would not willingly put you to trouble without evincing my gratitude."

"Well, then," replied Dee, "I will not refuse your request. And yet I would caution you to beware how you pry into the future. You may repent your rashness when it is too late."

"I have no fear," rejoined Fawkes. "Let me know the worst."

"Enough," answered Dee. "And now listen to me. That carcass having been placed in the ground without the holy rites of burial being duly performed, I have power over it. And, as the witch of Endor called up Samuel, as is recorded in Holy Writ,—as Erichtho raised up a corpse to reveal to Sextus Pompeius the event of the Pharsalian war,—as Elisha breathed life into the nostrils of the Shunamite's son,—as Alcestis was invoked by Hercules,—and as the dead maid was brought back to life by Apollonius Thyaneus,—so I, by certain powerful incantations, will allure the soul of the prophetess, for a short space, to its former tenement, and compel it to answer my questions. Dare you be present at this ceremony?"

"I dare," replied Fawkes.

"Follow me, then," said Dee. "You will need all your courage."

Muttering a hasty prayer, and secretly crossing himself, Guy Fawkes strode after him towards the grave. By the Doctor's directions, he, with

some reluctance, assisted Kelley to raise the corpse, and convey it to the charnel. Dee followed, bearing the lantern, and, on entering the building, closed and fastened the door.

The chamber in which Guy Fawkes found himself was in perfect keeping with the horrible ceremonial about to be performed. In one corner lay a mouldering heap of skulls, bones, and other fragments of mortality; in the other a pile of broken coffins, emptied of their tenants, and reared on end. But what chiefly attracted his attention, was a ghastly collection of human limbs, blackened with pitch, girded round with iron hoops, and hung, like meat in a shambles, against the wall. There were two heads, and, though the features were scarcely distinguishable, owing to the liquid in which they had been immersed, they still retained a terrific expression of agony. Seeing his attention directed to these revolting objects, Kelley informed him they were the quarters of the two priests who had recently been put to death, which had been left there previously to being placed on the church-gates. The implements, and some part of the attire

used by the executioner in his butcherly office, were scattered about, and mixed with the tools of the sexton; while in the centre of the room stood a large wooden frame supported by trestles. On this frame, stained with blood and smeared with pitch, showing the purpose to which it had been recently put, the body was placed. This done, Doctor Dee set down the lantern beside it; and, as the light fell upon its livid features, sullied with earth, and exhibiting traces of decay, Guy Fawkes was so appalled by the sight that he half repented of what he had undertaken.

Noticing his irresolution, Doctor Dee said, "You may yet retire if you think proper."

"No;" replied Fawkes, rousing himself; "I will go through with it."

"It is well," replied Dee. And he extinguished the light.

An awful silence now ensued, broken only by a low murmur from Doctor Dee, who appeared to be reciting an incantation. As he proceeded, his tones became louder, and his accents those of command. Suddenly, he paused, and seemed to await a response. But, as none

was made, greatly to the disappointment of Guy Fawkes, whose curiosity, notwithstanding his fears, was raised to the highest pitch, he cried, "Blood is wanting to complete the charm."

"If that is all, I will speedily supply the deficiency," replied Guy Fawkes; and, drawing his rapier, he bared his left arm, and pricked it deeply with the point of the weapon.

"I bleed now," he cried.

"Sprinkle the corpse with the ruddy current," rejoined Doctor Dee.

"Your commands are obeyed," replied Fawkes. "I have placed my hand on its breast, and the blood is flowing upon it."

Upon this the Doctor began to mutter an incantation in a louder and more authoritative tone than before. Presently, Kelley added his voice, and they both joined in a sort of chorus, but in a jargon wholly unintelligible to Guy Fawkes.

All at once a blue flame appeared above their heads, and, slowly descending, settled upon the brow of the corpse, lighting up the sunken

cavities of the eyes, and the discoloured and distorted features.

"The charm works," shouted Doctor Dee.

"She moves! she moves!" exclaimed Guy Fawkes. "She is alive!"

"Take off your hand," cried the Doctor, "or mischief may ensue." And he again continued his incantation.

"Down on your knees!" he exclaimed, at length, in a terrible voice. "The spirit is at hand."

There was a rushing sound, and a stream of dazzling lightning shot down upon the corpse, which emitted a hollow groan. In obedience to the Doctor's commands, Guy Fawkes had prostrated himself on the ground; but he kept his gaze steadily fixed on the body, which, to his infinite astonishment, slowly arose, until it stood erect upon the frame. There it remained perfectly motionless, with the arms close to the sides, and the habiliments torn and dishevelled. The blue light still retained its position upon the brow, and communicated a horrible glimmer to the features. The spectacle was so dreadful that

Guy Fawkes would fain have averted his eyes, but he was unable to do so. Doctor Dee and his companion, meanwhile, continued their invocations, until, as it seemed to Fawkes, the lips of the corpse moved, and an awful voice exclaimed, "Why have you called me?"

"Daughter!" replied Doctor Dee, rising, "in life thou wert endowed with the gift of prophecy. In the grave, that which is to come must be revealed to thee. We would question thee."

"Speak, and I will answer," replied the corpse.

"Interrogate her, my son," said Dee, addressing Fawkes, "and be brief, for the time is short. So long only as that flame burns have I power over her."

"Spirit of Elizabeth Orton," cried Guy Fawkes, "if indeed thou standest before me, and some demon hath not entered thy frame to delude me, —by all that is holy, and by every blessed saint, I adjure thee to tell me whether the scheme on which I am now engaged for the advantage of the Catholic Church will prosper?"

"Thou art mistaken, Guy Fawkes," returned

the corpse. "Thy scheme is not for the advantage of the Catholic Church."

"I will not pause to inquire wherefore," continued Fawkes. "But, grant that the means are violent and wrongful, will the end be successful?"

"The end will be death," replied the corpse.

"To the tyrant — to the oppressors?" demanded Fawkes.

"To the conspirators," was the answer.

"Ha!" ejaculated Fawkes.

"Proceed, if you have aught more to ask," cried Doctor Dee. "The flame is expiring."

"Shall we restore the fallen religion?" demanded Fawkes.

But before the words could be pronounced the light vanished, and a heavy sound was heard, as of the body falling on the frame.

"It is over," said Doctor Dee.

"Can you not summon her again?" asked Fawkes, in a tone of deep disappointment. "I had other questions to ask."

"Impossible!" replied the Doctor. "The

spirit is fled, and will not be recalled. We must now commit the body to the earth. And this time it shall be more decently interred."

"My curiosity is excited,—not satisfied," said Guy Fawkes. "Would it were to occur again!"

"It is ever thus," replied Doctor Dee. "We seek to know that which is interdicted, — and quench our thirst at a fountain that only inflames our curiosity the more. Be warned, my son. You are embarked on a perilous enterprise, and if you pursue it, it will lead you to certain destruction."

"I cannot retreat," rejoined Fawkes, "and would not, if I could. I am bound by an oath too terrible to be broken."

"I will absolve you of your oath, my son," said Doctor Dee, eagerly.

"You cannot, reverend sir," replied Fawkes. "By no sophistry could I clear my conscience of the ties imposed upon it. I have sworn never to desist from the execution of this scheme, unless those engaged in it shall give me leave. Nay, so resolved am I, that if I stood alone I would go on."

As he spoke, a deep groan issued from the corpse.

"You are again warned, my son," said Dee.

"Come forth," said Guy Fawkes, rushing towards the door, and throwing it open. "This place stifles me."

The night has already been described as bright and beautiful. Before him stood the Collegiate Church bathed in moonlight. He gazed abstractedly at this venerable structure for a few moments, and then returned to the charnel, where he found Doctor Dee and Kelley employed in placing the body of the prophetess in a coffin, which they had taken from a pile in the corner. He immediately proffered his assistance, and in a short space the task was completed. The coffin was then borne towards the grave, at the edge of which it was laid while the burial-service was recited by Doctor Dee. This ended, it was lowered into its shallow resting-place, and speedily covered with earth.

When all was ready for their departure, the

Doctor turned to Fawkes, and, bidding him farewell, observed,

"If you are wise, my son, you will profit by the awful warning you have this night received."

"Before we part, reverend sir," replied Fawkes, "I would ask if you know of other means whereby an insight may be obtained into the future?"

"Many, my son," replied Dee. "I have a magic glass, in which, with due preparation, you may behold exact representations of coming events. I am now returning to the College, and if you will accompany me, I will show it to you."

The offer was eagerly accepted, and the party quitted the churchyard.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MAGIC GLASS.

THE old College of Manchester occupied, as is well known, the site of the existing structure, called after the benevolent individual by whom that admirable charity was founded, and whom we have ventured to introduce in this history,—the Chetham Hospital. Much, indeed, of the ancient building remains; for though it was considerably repaired and enlarged, being "very ruinous and in great decay," at the time of its purchase in 1654, by the feoffees under Humphrey Chetham's will, from the sequestrators of the Earl of Derby's estates, still the general character of the fabric has been preserved, and several of its chambers retained. Originally built on the foundation of a manor-house denominated The Baron's Hall,—the abode of the Grelleys

and the De la Warrs, lords of Manchester,—the College continued to be used as the residence of the warden and fellows of the Collegiate Church until the reign of Edward the First, when that body was dissolved. On the accession, however, of Mary, the College was re-established; but the residence of the ecclesiastical body being removed to a house in Deansgate, the building was allowed to become extremely dilapidated, and was used partly as a prison for recusants and other offenders, and partly as a magazine for powder. In this state Doctor Dee found it when he succeeded to the wardenship in 1595, and preferring it, notwithstanding its ruinous condition, to the house appointed for him elsewhere, took up his abode within it.

Situated on a high rock, overhanging the river Irk—at that time a clear stream, remarkable for the excellence of its fish,—and constructed entirely of stone, the old College had then, and still has to a certain extent, a venerable and monastic appearance. During Dee's occupation of it, it became a sort of weird abode in the eyes of the vulgar, and many a timorous look was

cast at it by those who walked at eventide on the opposite bank of the Irk. Sometimes the curiosity of the watchers was rewarded by beholding a few sparks issue from the chimney, and now and then, the red reflection of a fire might be discerned through the window. But generally nothing could be perceived, and the building seemed as dark and mysterious as its occupant.

One night, however, a loud explosion took place,—so loud, indeed, that it shook the whole pile to its foundation, dislodged one or two of the chimneys, and overthrew an old wall, the stones of which rolled into the river beneath. Alarmed by the concussion, the inhabitants of Hunt's Bank rushed forth, and saw, to their great alarm, that the wing of the College occupied by Doctor Dee was in flames. Though many of them attributed the circumstance to supernatural agency, and were fully persuaded that the enemy of mankind was at that instant bearing off the conjuror and his assistant, and refused to interfere to stop the conflagration, others more humane, and less superstitious, hastened to lend their aid to extinguish the flames.

On reaching the College, they could scarcely credit their senses on finding that there was no appearance of fire; and they were met by the Doctor and his companion at the gates, who informed them that their presence was unnecessary, as all danger was over. From that night Doctor Dee's reputation as a wizard was firmly established.

At the period of this history, Doctor Dee was fast verging on eighty, having passed a long life in severe and abstruse study. He had travelled much, had visited most of the foreign courts, where he was generally well received, and was profoundly versed in mathematics, astronomy, the then popular science of judicial astrology, and other occult learning. So accurate were his calculations esteemed, that he was universally consulted as an oracle. For some time, he resided in Germany, where he was invited by the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and retained by his brother and successor, Ferdinando. He next went to Louvain, where his reputation had preceded him; and from thence to Paris, where he lectured at the schools on geometry, and

was offered a professorship of the university, but declined it. On his return to England in 1551, he was appointed one of the instructors of the youthful monarch, Edward the Sixth, who presented him with an annual pension of a hundred marks. This he was permitted to commute for the rectory of Upton-upon-Severn, which he retained until the accession of Mary, when being charged with devising her Majesty's destruction by enchantments, — certain waxen images of the Queen having been found within his abode,—he was thrown into prison, rigorously treated, and kept in durance for a long period. At length, from want of sufficient proof against him, he was liberated.

Dee shared the common fate of all astrologers: he was alternately honoured and disgraced. His next patron was Lord Robert Dudley (afterwards the celebrated Earl of Leicester), who, it is well-known, was a firm believer in the superstitious arts to which Dee was addicted, and by whom he was employed, on the accession of Elizabeth, to erect a scheme to ascertain the best day for her coronation. His prediction was so fortunate

that it procured him the favour of the Queen, from whom he received many marks of regard. As it is not needful to follow him through his various wanderings, it may be sufficient to mention, that in 1564 he proceeded to Germany on a visit to the Emperor Maximilian, to whom he dedicated his "*Monas Hieroglyphica*;" that in 1571 he fell grievously sick in Lorrain, whither two physicians were despatched to his aid by Elizabeth; and that on his recovery he returned to his own country, and retired to Mortlake, where he gathered together a vast library, comprising the rarest and most curious works on all sciences, together with a large collection of manuscripts.

While thus living in retirement, he was sought out by Edward Kelley, a native of Worcestershire, who represented himself as in possession of an old book of magic, containing forms of invocation, by which spirits might be summoned and controlled, as well as a ball of ivory, found in the tomb of a bishop who had made great progress in hermetic philosophy, which was filled with the powder of projection. These treasures

Kelley offered to place in the hands of the Doctor on certain conditions, which were immediately acquiesced in, and thenceforth Kelley became a constant inmate in his house, and an assistant in all his practices. Shortly afterwards, they were joined by a Polish nobleman, Albert de Laski, Palatine of Suabia, whom they accompanied to Prague, at the instance of the Emperor Rodolph the Second, who desired to be initiated into their mysteries. Their reception at this court was not such as to induce a long sojourn at it; and Dee having been warned by his familiar spirits to sell his effects and depart, complied with the intimation, and removed to Poland. The same fate attended him here. The nuncio of the Pope denounced him as a sorcerer, and demanded that he should be delivered up to the Inquisition. This was refused by the monarch; but Dee and his companion were banished from his dominions, and compelled to fly to Bohemia, where they took refuge in the castle of Trebona, belonging to Count Rosenberg. Shortly afterwards, Dee and Kelley separated, the magical instruments being delivered to the former, who

bent his course homewards; and on his arrival in London was warmly welcomed by the Queen. During his absence, his house at Mortlake had been broken open by the populace, under the pretence of its being the abode of a wizard, and rifled of its valuable library and manuscripts, —a loss severely felt by its owner. Some years were now passed by Dee in great destitution, during which he prosecuted his studies with the same ardour as before, until at length in 1595, when he was turned seventy, fortune again smiled upon him, and he was appointed to the wardenship of the College at Manchester, whither he repaired, and was installed in great pomp.

But his residence in this place was not destined to be a tranquil one. His reputation as a dealer in the black art had preceded him, and rendered him obnoxious to the clergy, with whom he had constant disputes, and a feud subsisted between him and the fellows of his church. It has already been mentioned that he refused to occupy the house allotted him, but preferred taking up his quarters in the old

dilapidated College. Various reasons were assigned by his enemies for this singular choice of abode. They affirmed —and with some reason—that he selected it because he desired to elude observation,—and that his mode of life, sufficiently improper in a layman, was altogether indecorous in an ecclesiastic. By the common people he was universally regarded as a conjuror —and many at first came to consult him; but he peremptorily dismissed all such applicants; and, when seven females, supposed to be possessed, were brought to him that he might exercise his power over the evil spirits, he refused to interfere. He also publicly examined and rebuked a juggler, named Hartley, who pretended to magical knowledge. But these things did not blind his enemies, who continued to harass him to such a degree, that he addressed a petition to James the First, entreating to be brought to trial, when the accusations preferred against him might be fully investigated, and his character cleared. The application, and another to the like effect addressed to parliament, were disregarded. Dee had not been long established in Man-

chester when he was secretly joined by Kelley, and they recommenced their search after the grand secret, — passing the nights in making various alchymical experiments, or in fancied conferences with invisible beings.

Among other magical articles possessed by Doctor Dee was a large globe of crystal, which he termed the Holy Stone, because he believed it had been brought him by "angelical ministry;" and "in which," according to Meric Casaubon, "and out of which, by persons qualified for it, and admitted to the sight of it, all shapes and figures mentioned in every action were seen, and voices heard." The same writer informs us it was "round-shaped, of a pretty bigness, and most like unto crystal." Dee himself declared to the Emperor Rodolph, "that the spirits had brought him a stone of that value that no earthly kingdom was of such worthiness as to be compared to the virtue and dignity thereof." He was in the habit of daily consulting this marvellous stone, and recording the visions he saw therein, and the conferences he held through it with the invisible world.

Followed by Guy Fawkes and Kelley, the Doctor took his way down Long Mill Gate, and stopping at an arched gateway on the left, near which, on the site of the modern structure, stood the public school, founded a century before by Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, — he unlocked a small wicket, and entered a spacious court, surrounded on one side by high stone walls, and on the other by a wing of the College.

Conducting his guest to the principal entrance of the building, which lay at the farther end of the court, Doctor Dee ushered him into a large chamber, panelled with oak, and having a curiously-moulded ceiling, ornamented with grotesque sculpture. This room, still in existence, and now occupied by the master of the school, formed Doctor Dee's library. Offering Fawkes a chair, the Doctor informed him that when all was ready, Kelley should summon him, and, accompanied by his assistant, he withdrew. Half an hour elapsed before Kelley returned. Motioning Guy Fawkes to follow him, he led the way through several intricate passages to a chamber which was evidently the magician's sacred retreat.

In a recess on one side stood a table, covered with cabalistic characters and figures, referring to the celestial influences. On it was placed the holy stone, diffusing such a glistening radiance as is emitted by the pebble called cat's-eye. On the floor a wide circle was described, in the rings of which magical characters, resembling those on the table, were traced. In front stood a brasier, filled with flaming coals; and before it hung a heavy black curtain, appearing to shroud some mystery from view.

Desiring Fawkes to place himself in the centre of the circle, Doctor Dee took several ingredients from a basket handed him by Kelley, and cast them into the brasier. As each herb or gum was ignited, the flame changed its colour; now becoming crimson, now green, now blue, while fragrant or noxious odours loaded the atmosphere. These suffumigations ended, Dee seated himself on a chair near the table, whither he was followed by Kelley, and commanding Fawkes not to move a footstep, as he valued his safety, he waved his wand, and began in a solemn tone to utter an invocation. As he continued, a hollow noise was heard overhead,

which gradually increased in loudness, until it appeared as if the walls were tumbling about their ears.

"The spirits are at hand!" cried Dee. "Do not look behind you, or they will tear you in pieces."

As he spoke, a horrible din was heard, as of mingled howling, shrieking, and laughter. It was succeeded by a low faint strain of music, which gradually died away, and then all was silent.

"All is prepared," cried Dee. "Now, what would you behold?"

"The progress of the great enterprise," replied Fawkes.

Doctor Dee waved his wand. The curtains slowly unfolded, and Guy Fawkes perceived as in a glass a group of dark figures; amongst which he noticed one in all respects resembling himself. A priest was apparently proposing an oath, which the others were uttering.

"Do you recognise them?" said Doctor Dee.

"Perfectly," replied Fawkes.

"Look again," said Dee.

As he spoke the figures melted away, and



Doctor Dee in conjunction with his Seer Edward Kelley, exhibiting his magical skill to Guy Fawkes

a new scene was presented on the glass. It was a gloomy vault, filled with barrels, partly covered with fagots and billets of wood.

"Have you seen enough?" demanded Dee.

"No," replied Fawkes, firmly. "I have seen what is past. I would behold that which is to come."

"Look again, then," rejoined the Doctor, waving his wand.

For an instant the glass was darkened, and nothing could be discerned except the lurid flame and thick smoke arising from the brasier. The next moment, an icy chill shot through the frame of Guy Fawkes as he beheld a throng of skeletons arranged before him. The bony fingers of the foremost of the grisly assemblage were pointed towards an indistinct object at its feet. As this object gradually became more defined, Guy Fawkes perceived that it was a figure resembling himself, stretched upon the wheel, and writhing in the agonies of torture.

He uttered an exclamation of terror, and the curtains were instantly closed.

Half an hour afterwards, Guy Fawkes quitted the College, and returned to the Seven Stars.



Doctor Dee, in conjunction with his seer Edward Kelley, exhibiting his magical skill to Guy Fawkes



CHAPTER IX.

THE PRISON ON SALFORD BRIDGE.

On the following morning, Guy Fawkes had a long and private conference with Father Oldcorne. The priest appeared greatly troubled by the communication made to him, but he said nothing, and was for some time lost in reflection, and evidently weighing within himself what course it would be best to pursue. His uneasiness was not without effect on Viviana Radcliffe, and she ventured at last to inquire whether he apprehended any new danger.

"I scarcely know what I apprehend, dear daughter," he answered. "But circumstances have occurred which render it impossible we can remain longer in our present asylum with safety. We must quit it at nightfall."

"Is our retreat then discovered?" inquired Viviana, in alarm.

"Not as yet, I trust," replied Oldcorne; "but I have just ascertained from a messenger that the pursuivant, who, we thought, had departed for Chester, is still lingering within the town. He has offered a large reward for my apprehension, and having traced us to Manchester, declares he will leave no house unsearched till he finds us. He has got together a fresh band of soldiers, and is now visiting every place he thinks likely to afford us shelter."

"If this is the case," rejoined Viviana, "why remain here a single moment? Let us fly at once."

"That would avail nothing, — or rather, it would expose us to fresh risk, dear daughter," replied Oldcorne. "Every approach to the town is guarded, and soldiers are posted at the corners of the streets, who stop and examine each suspected person."

"Heaven protect us!" exclaimed Viviana.

"But this is not all," continued the priest. "By some inexplicable and mysterious means, the designs of certain of the most assured friends of the Catholic cause have come to the know-

ledge of our enemies, and the lives and safeties of many worthy men will be endangered: amongst others, that of your father."

"You terrify me!" cried Viviana.

"The rack shall force nothing from me, father," said Fawkes, sternly.

"Nor from me, my son," rejoined Oldcorne. "I have that within me which will enable me to sustain the bitterest agonies that the persecutors of our Church can inflict."

"Nor shall it force aught from me," added Viviana. "For, though you have trusted me with nothing that can implicate others, I plainly perceive some plot is in agitation for the restoration of our religion, and I more than suspect Mr. Catesby is its chief contriver."

"Daughter!" exclaimed Oldcorne, uneasily.

"Fear nothing, father," she rejoined. "As I have said, the rack shall not force me to betray you. Neither should it keep me silent when I feel that my counsel—such as it is—may avail you. The course you are pursuing is a dangerous and fatal one,—dangerous to yourselves, and fatal to the cause you would serve. Do not

deceive yourselves. You are struggling hopelessly and unrighteously, and Heaven will never assist an undertaking which has its aim in the terrible waste of life you meditate."

Father Oldcorne made no reply, but walked apart with Guy Fawkes; and Viviana abandoned herself to sorrowful reflection.

Shortly after this, the door was suddenly thrown open, and Humphrey Chetham rushed into the room. His looks were full of apprehension, and Viviana was at no loss to perceive that some calamity was at hand.

"What is the matter?" she cried, rising.

"The pursuivant and his men are below," he replied. "They are interrogating the hostess, and are about to search the house. I managed to pass them unperceived."

"We will resist them to the last," said Guy Fawkes, drawing a petronel.

"Resistance will be in vain," rejoined Humphrey Chetham. "They more than treble our number."

"Is there no means of escape?" asked Viviana.

"None whatever," replied Chetham. "I hear them on the stairs. The terrified hostess has not dared to deny you, and is conducting them hither."

"Stand back!" cried Guy Fawkes, striding towards the door, "and let me alone confront them. That accursed pursuivant has escaped me once. But he shall not do so a second time."

"My son," said Oldcorne, advancing towards him, "preserve yourself, if possible. Your life is of consequence to the great cause. Think not of us—think not of revenging yourself upon this caitiff. But think of the high destiny for which you are reserved. That window offers a means of retreat. Avail yourself of it. Fly!—fly!"

"Ay, fly!" repeated Viviana. "And you, Humphrey Chetham,—your presence here can do no good. Quick!—they come!"

"Nothing should induce me to quit you at such a moment, Viviana," replied Chetham, "but the conviction that I may be able to liberate you, should these miscreants convey you to prison."

"Fly!—fly, my son," cried Oldcorne. "They are at the door."

Thus urged, Guy Fawkes reluctantly yielded to Oldcorne's entreaties, and sprang through the window. He was followed by Chetham. Viviana darted to the casement, and saw that they had alighted in safety on the ground, and were flying swiftly up Shude Hill. Meanwhile, the pursuivant had reached the door, which Chetham had taken the precaution to fasten, and was trying to burst it open. The bolts offered but a feeble resistance to his fury, and the next moment he dashed into the room, at the head of a band of soldiers.

"Seize them!" he cried. "Ha!" he added, glancing round the room with a look of disappointment, "where are the others? Where is the soldier in the Spanish garb? Where is Humphrey Chetham? Confess at once, dog!" he continued, seizing the priest by the throat, "or I will pluck the secret from your breast."

"Do not harm him," interposed Viviana. "I will answer the question. They are fled."

"Fled!" echoed the pursuivant in consternation. "How?"

"Through that window," replied Viviana.

"After them!" cried the pursuivant to some of his attendants. "Take the soldier, dead or alive!—And now," he continued, as his orders were obeyed, "you, Father Oldcorne, Jesuit and traitor, and you, Viviana Radcliffe, his shelterer and abettor, I shall convey you both to the prison on Salford Bridge. Seize them, and bring them along."

"Touch me not," rejoined Viviana, pushing the men aside, who rudely advanced to obey their leader's command. "You have no warrant for this brutality. I am ready to attend you. Take my arm, father."

Abashed at this reproof, the pursuivant stalked out of the room. Surrounded by the soldiers, Viviana and the priest followed. The sad procession was attended by crowds to the very door of the prison, where, by the pursuivant's commands, they were locked in separate cells.

The cell in which Viviana was confined was a small chamber at the back of the prison, and

on the upper story. It had a small grated window overlooking the river. It has already been mentioned that this prison was originally a chapel built in the reign of Edward the Third, and had only recently been converted into a place of security for recusants. The chamber allotted to Viviana was contrived in the roof, and was so low that she could scarcely stand upright in it. It was furnished with a chair, a small table, and a straw pallet.

The hours passed wearily with Viviana as they were marked by the deep-toned clock of the Collegiate Church, the tall tower of which fronted her window. Oppressed by the most melancholy reflections, she was for some time a prey almost to despair. On whatever side she looked, the prospect was equally cheerless, and her sole desire was that she might find a refuge from her cares in the seclusion of a convent. For this she prayed,—and she prayed also that Heaven would soften the hearts of her oppressors, and enable those who suffered to endure their yoke with patience. In the evening provisions were brought her, and placed upon

the table, together with a lamp, by a surly looking gaoler. But Viviana had no inclination to eat, and left them untouched. Neither could she prevail upon herself to lie down on the wretched pallet, and she therefore determined to pass the night in the chair.

After some hours of watchfulness, her eyelids closed, and she continued to slumber until she was aroused by a slight noise at the window. Starting at the sound, she flew towards it, and perceived in the gloom the face of a man. She would have uttered a loud cry, when the circumstances of her situation rushed to her mind, and the possibility that it might be a friend checked her. The next moment satisfied her that she had acted rightly. A voice, which she recognised as that of Humphrey Chetham, called to her by name in a low tone, bidding her fear nothing, as he was come to set her free.

"How have you managed to reach this window?" asked Viviana.

"By a rope ladder," he answered. "I contrived in the darkness to clamber upon the roof of the prison from the parapets of the bridge,

and, after securing the ladder to a projection, dropped the other end into a boat, rowed by Guy Fawkes, and concealed beneath the arches of the bridge. If I can remove this bar so as to allow you to pass through the window, dare you descend the ladder?"

"No," replied Viviana, shuddering. "My brain reels at the mere idea."

"Think of the fate you will escape," urged Chetham.

"And what will become of Father Oldcorne?" asked Viviana. "Where is he?"

"In the cell immediately beneath you," replied Chetham.

"Can you not liberate him?" she continued.

"Assuredly, if he will risk the descent," answered Chetham, reluctantly.

"Free him first," rejoined Viviana, "and at all hazards I will accompany you."

The young merchant made no reply, but disappeared from the window. Viviana strained her gaze downwards; but it was too dark to allow her to see anything. She, however, heard a noise like that occasioned by a file; and shortly after-

wards a few muttered words informed her that the priest was passing through the window. The cords of the ladder shook against the bars of her window, — and she held her breath for fear. From this state of suspense she was relieved in a few minutes by Humphrey Chetham, who informed her that Oldcorne had descended in safety, and was in the boat with Guy Fawkes.

"I will fulfil my promise," replied Viviana, trembling; "but I fear my strength will fail me."

"You had better find death below than tarry here," replied Humphrey Chetham, who as he spoke was rapidly filing through the iron bar. "In a few minutes this impediment will be removed."

The young merchant worked hard, and in a short time the stout bar yielded to his efforts.

"Now, then," he cried, springing into the room, "you are free."

"I dare not make the attempt," said Viviana; "my strength utterly fails me."

"Nay, then," he replied; "I will take the risk upon myself. You must not remain here."

So saying, he caught her in his arms, and bore her through the window.

With some difficulty, and no little risk, he succeeded in gaining a footing on the ladder. This accomplished, he began slowly to descend. When half way down, he found he had overrated his strength, and he feared he should be compelled to quit his hold; but, nerved by his passion, he held on, and making a desperate effort, completed the descent in safety.

CHAPTER X.

THE FATE OF THE PURSUIVANT.

Assisted by the stream, and plying his oars with great rapidity, Guy Fawkes soon left the town far behind him; nor did he relax his exertions until checked by Humphrey Chetham. He then ceased rowing, and directed the boat towards the left bank of the river.

"Here we propose to land," observed the young merchant to Viviana. "We are not more than a hundred yards from Ordsall Cave, where you can take refuge for a short time, while I proceed to the Hall, and ascertain whether you can return to it with safety."

"I place myself entirely in your hands," she replied; "but I fear such a course will be to rush into the very face of danger. Oh! that

I could join my father at Holywell! With him I should feel secure."

"Means may be found to effect your wishes," returned Humphrey Chetham; "but, after the suffering you have recently endured, it will scarcely be prudent to undertake so long a journey without a few hours' repose. To-morrow, — or the next day, — you may set out."

"I am fully equal to it now," rejoined Viviana, eagerly; "and any fatigue I may undergo will not equal my present anxiety. You have already done so much for me, that I venture to presume still further upon your kindness. Provide some means of conveyance for me and for Father Oldcorne to Chester, and I shall for ever be beholden to you."

"I will not only do what you desire, Viviana, if it be possible," answered Chetham; "but, if you will allow me, I will serve as your escort."

"And I, also," added Guy Fawkes.

"All I fear is, that your strength may fail you," continued the young merchant in a tone of uneasiness.

"Fear nothing then," replied Viviana. "I am made of firmer material than you imagine. Think only of what *you* can do, and doubt not my ability to do it, also."

"I ever deemed you of a courageous nature, daughter," observed Oldcorne; "but your resolution surpasses my belief."

By this time the boat had approached the shore. Leaping upon the rocky bank, the young merchant assisted Viviana to land, and then performed the same service for the priest. Guy Fawkes was the last to disembark; and, having pulled the skiff aground, he followed the others, who waited for him at a short distance. The night was profoundly dark, and the path they had taken, being shaded by large trees, was scarcely discernible. Carefully guiding Viviana, who leaned on him for support, the young merchant proceeded at a slow pace, and with the utmost caution. Suddenly, they were surprised and alarmed by a vivid blaze of light bursting through the trees on the left.

"Some building must be on fire!" exclaimed Viviana.

"It is Ordsall Hall, — it is your father's residence," cried Humphrey Chetham.

"It is the work of that accursed pursuivant, I will be sworn," said Guy Fawkes.

"If it be so, may Heaven's fire consume him!" rejoined Oldcorne.

"Alas! alas!" cried Viviana, bursting into tears, "I thought myself equal to every calamity; but this new stroke of fate is more than I can bear."

As she spoke, the conflagration evidently increased. The sky was illumined by the red reflection of the flames; and as the party hurried forward to a rising ground, whence a better view could be obtained of the spectacle, they saw the dark walls of the ancient mansion apparently wrapped in the devouring element.

"Let us hasten thither," cried Viviana, distractedly.

"I and Guy Fawkes will fly there," replied the young merchant, "and render all the assistance in our power. But, first, let me convey you to the cave."

More dead than alive, Viviana suffered herself

to be borne in that direction. Making his way over every impediment, Chetham soon reached the excavation; and depositing his lovely burthen upon the stone couch, and leaving her in charge of the priest, he hurried with Guy Fawkes towards the Hall.

On arriving at the termination of the avenue, they found, to their great relief, that it was not the main structure, but an outbuilding which was in flames, and from its situation the young merchant conceived it to be the stables. As soon as they made this discovery, they slackened their pace, being apprehensive, from the shouts and other sounds that reached them, that some hostile party might be among the assemblage. Crossing the drawbridge — which was fortunately lowered, — they were about to shape their course towards the stables, which lay at the further side of the Hall, when they perceived the old steward, Heydocke, standing at the doorway and wringing his hands in distraction. Humphrey Chetham immediately called to him.

"I should know that voice!" cried the old man, stepping forward. "Ah! Mr. Chetham,

is it you? You are arrived at a sad time, sir — a sad time — to see the old house, where I have dwelt, man and boy, sixty years and more, in flames. But one calamity has trodden upon the heels of another. Ever since Sir William departed for Holywell nothing has gone right —nothing whatever. First, the house was searched by the pursuivant and his gang; then, my young mistress disappeared; then it was rifled by these plunderers; and now, to crown all, it is on fire, and will speedily be burnt to the ground."

"Say not so," replied the young merchant. "The flames have not yet reached the Hall; and, if exertion is used, they may be extinguished without further mischief."

"Let those who have kindled them extinguish them," replied Heydocke, sullenly. "I will not raise hand more."

"Who are the incendiaries?" demanded Fawkes.

"The pursuivant and his myrmidons," replied Heydocke. "They came here to-night; and after ransacking the house under pretence of

procuring further evidence against my master, and carrying off everything valuable they could collect,—plate, jewels, ornaments, money, and even wearing-apparel,—they ended by locking up all the servants,—except myself, who managed to elude their vigilance,—in the cellar, and setting fire to the stables."

"Wretches!" exclaimed Humphrey Chetham.

"Wretches, indeed!" repeated the steward. "But this is not all the villany they contemplate. I had concealed myself in the store-room, under a heap of lumber, and in searching for me they chanced upon a barrel of gunpowder—"

"Well!" interrupted Guy Fawkes.

"Well, sir," pursued Heydocke, "I heard the pursuivant remark to one of his comrades, 'This is a lucky discovery. If we can't find the steward, we'll blow him and the old house to the devil.' Just then, some one came to tell him I was hidden in the stables, and the whole troop adjourned thither. But being baulked of their prey, I suppose, they wreaked their vengeance in the way you perceive."

"No doubt," rejoined Humphrey Chetham.

"But they shall bitterly rue it. I will myself represent the affair to the Commissioners."

"It will be useless," groaned Heydocke. "There is no law to protect the property of a Catholic."

"Where is the barrel of gunpowder you spoke of?" asked Guy Fawkes, as if struck by a sudden idea.

"The villains took it with them when they quitted the store-room," replied the steward. "I suppose they have got it in the yard."

"They have lighted a fire which shall be quenched with their blood," rejoined Fawkes fiercely. "Follow me. I may need you both."

So saying, he darted off, and turning the corner, came in front of the blazing pile. Occupying one side of a large quadrangular court, the stables were wholly disconnected with the Hall, and though the fire burnt furiously, yet as the wind carried the flames and sparks in a contrary direction, it was possible the latter building might escape if due precaution were taken. So far, however, from this being the case, it seemed the object of the bystanders to assist the pro-

gress of the conflagration. Several horses, saddled and bridled, had been removed from the stable, and placed within an open cowhouse. To these Guy Fawkes called Chetham's attention, and desired him and the old steward to secure some of them. Hastily giving directions to Heydocke, the young merchant obeyed,—sprang on the back of the nearest courser, and seizing the bridles of two others, rode off with them. His example was followed by Heydocke, and one steed only was left. Such was the confusion and clamour prevailing around, that the above proceeding passed unnoticed.

Guy Fawkes, meanwhile, ensconcing himself behind the court-gate, looked about for the barrel of gunpowder. For some time he could discover no trace of it. At length, beneath a shed, not far from him, he perceived a soldier seated upon a small cask, which he had no doubt was the object he was in search of. So intent was the man upon the spectacle before him, that he was wholly unaware of the approach of an enemy; and creeping noiselessly up to him, Guy Fawkes felled him to the ground with a blow from the

heavy butt-end of his petronel. The action was not perceived by the others; and carrying the cask out of the yard, Fawkes burst in the lid, and ascertained that the contents were what they had been represented. He then glanced around, to see how he could best execute his purpose.

On the top of the wall adjoining the stables he beheld the pursuivant, with three or four soldiers, giving directions and issuing orders. Another and lower wall, forming the opposite side of the quadrangle, and built on the edge of the moat, approached the scene of the fire, and on this, Guy Fawkes with the barrel of gunpowder on his shoulder, mounted. Concealing himself behind a tree which overshadowed it, he watched a favourable moment for his enterprise.

He had not to wait long. Prompted by some undefinable feeling, which caused him to rush upon his destruction, the pursuivant ventured upon the roof of the stables, and was followed by his companions. No sooner did this occur, than Guy Fawkes dashed forward, and hurled the barrel with all his force into the midst of the flames, throwing himself at the same

moment into the moat. The explosion was instantaneous and tremendous;—so loud as to be audible even under the water. Its effects were terrible. The bodies of the pursuivant and his companions were blown into the air, and carried to the further side of the moat. Of those standing before the building, several were destroyed, and all more or less injured. The walls were thrown down by the concussion, and the roof and its fiery fragments projected into the moat. An effectual stop was put to the conflagration; and, when Guy Fawkes rose to the boiling and agitated surface of the water, the flames were entirely extinguished. Hearing groans on the opposite bank of the moat, he forced his way through the blazing beams, which were hissing near him; and snatching up a still burning fragment, hastened in the direction of the sound. In the blackened and mutilated object that met his gaze, he recognised the pursuivant. The dying wretch also recognised him, and attempted to speak; but in vain — his tongue refused its office, and with a horrible attempt at articulation he expired.

Alarmed by the explosion, the domestics,—who it has already been mentioned, were confined in the cellar,—were rendered so desperate by their fears, that they contrived to break out of their prison, and now hastened to the stables to ascertain the cause of the report. Leaving them to assist the sufferers, whose dreadful groans awakened some feelings of compunction in his iron breast, Guy Fawkes caught the steed,—which had broken its bridle and rushed off, and now stood shivering, shaking, and drenched in moisture near the drawbridge,—and, mounting it, galloped towards the cave.

At its entrance, he was met by Humphrey Chetham and Oldcorne, who eagerly inquired what had happened.

Guy Fawkes briefly explained.

"It is the hand of Heaven manifested by your arm, my son," observed the priest. "Would that it had stricken the tyrant and apostate prince by whom our Church is persecuted! But his turn will speedily arrive."

"Peace, father!" cried Guy Fawkes sternly.

"I do not lament the fate of the pursuivant,"

observed Humphrey Chetham. "But this is a frightful waste of human life—and in such a cause!"

"It is the cause of Heaven, young sir," rejoined the priest, angrily.

"I do not think so," returned Chetham; "and, but for my devotion to Viviana, I would have no further share in it."

"You are at liberty to leave us, if you think proper," retorted the priest, coldly.

"Nay, say not so, father," interposed Viviana, who had been an unobserved listener to the foregoing discourse. "You owe your life—your liberty to Mr. Chetham."

"True, daughter," replied the priest. "I have been too hasty, and entreat his forgiveness."

"You have it, reverend sir," rejoined the young merchant. "And now, Master Heydocke," he added, turning to the steward, "you may return to the Hall with safety. No one will molest you more, and your presence may be needed."

"But my young mistress—" said Heydocke.

"I am setting out for Holywell to join my

father," replied Viviana. "You will receive our instructions from that place."

"It is well," returned the old man, bowing respectfully. "Heaven shield us from further misfortune!"

Humphrey Chetham having assisted Viviana into the saddle, and the rest of the party having mounted, they took the road to Chester, while Heydocke returned to the Hall.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PILGRIMAGE TO SAINT WINIFRED'S WELL.

EARLY on the following morning, the party, who had ridden hard, and had paused only for a short time at Knutsford to rest their steeds, approached the ancient and picturesque city of Chester. Skirting its high, and then partly fortified walls, above which appeared the massive tower of the venerable cathedral, they passed through the east-gate, and proceeding along the street deriving its name from that entrance, were about to halt before the door of a large hostel, called the Saint Werburgh's Abbey, when, to their great surprise, they perceived Catesby riding towards them.

"I thought I could not be mistaken," cried the latter, as he drew near and saluted Viviana. "I was about to set out for Manchester with

a despatch to you from your father, Miss Radcliffe, when this most unexpected and fortunate encounter spares me the journey. But may I ask why I see you here, and thus attended?" he added, glancing uneasily at Humphrey Chetham.

A few words from Father Oldcorne explained all. Catesby affected to bend his brow, and appear concerned at the relation. But he could scarcely repress his satisfaction.

"Sir William Radcliffe *must* join us now," he whispered to the priest.

"He must—he *shall*," replied Oldcorne, in the same tone.

"Your father wishes you to join him at Holt, Miss Radcliffe," remarked Catesby, turning to her, "whence the pilgrimage starts to-morrow for Saint Winifred's Well. There are already nearly thirty devout persons assembled."

"Indeed!" replied Viviana. "May I inquire their names?"

"Sir Everard and Lady Digby," replied Catesby; "the Lady Anne Vaux and her sister, Mrs. Brooksby; Mr. Ambrose Rookwood and his

wife, the two Winters, Tresham, Wright, Fathers Garnet and Fisher, and many others, in all probability unknown to you. The procession started ten days ago from Gothurst, in Buckinghamshire, Sir Everard Digby's residence, and proceeded from thence by slow stages to Norbrook and Haddington, at each of which houses it halted for some days. Yesterday, it reached Holt, and starts, as I have just told you, tomorrow for Holywell. If you are so disposed, you will be able to attend it."

"I will gladly do so," replied Viviana. "And since I find it is not necessary to hurry forward, I will rest myself for a short time here."

So saying, she dismounted, and the whole party entered the hostel. Viviana withdrew to seek a short repose, and glance over her father's letter, while Catesby, Guy Fawkes, and Oldcorne, were engaged in deep consultation. Humphrey Chetham, perceiving that his attendance was no further required, and that he was an object of suspicion and dislike to Catesby, — for whom he also entertained a similar aversion,— prepared to return. And when Viviana made

her appearance, he advanced to bid her farewell.

"I can be of no further service to you, Viviana," he said, in a mournful tone; "and as my presence might be as unwelcome to your father, as it seems to be to others of your friends, I will now take my leave."

"Farewell, Mr. Chetham," she replied. "I will not attempt to oppose your departure; for, much as I grieve to lose you — and that I do so these tears will testify,—I feel that it is for the best. I owe you much—more—far more than I can ever repay. It would be unworthy in me, and unfair to you, to say that I do not, and shall not ever feel the deepest interest in you; that, next to my father, there is no one whom I regard — nay, whom I love so much."

"Love! Viviana?" echoed the young merchant, trembling.

"Love, Mr. Chetham," she continued, turning very pale; "since you compel me to repeat the word. I avow it boldly, because—" and her voice faltered, —"I would not have you

suppose me ungrateful, and because I never can be yours."

"I will not attempt to dissuade you from the fatal determination you have formed of burying your charms in a cloister," rejoined Humphrey Chetham. "But, oh! if you *do* love me, why condemn yourself—why condemn me to hopeless misery?"

"I will tell you why," replied Viviana. "Because you are not of my faith; and because I never will wed a heretic."

"I am answered," replied the young merchant, sadly.

"Mr. Chetham," interposed Oldcorne, who had approached them unperceived; "it is in your power to change Viviana's determination."

"How?" asked the young merchant, starting.

"By being reconciled to the Church of Rome."

"Then it will remain unaltered," replied Chetham, firmly.

"And, if Mr. Chetham would consent to this proposal, *I* would not," said Viviana. "Farewell," she added, extending her hand to him, which he pressed to his lips. "Do not let us

prolong an interview so painful to us both. The best wish I can desire for you is, that we may never meet again."

Without another word, and without hazarding a look at the object of his affections, Chetham rushed out of the room, and mounting his horse, rode off in the direction of Manchester.

"Daughter," observed Oldcorne, as soon as he was gone, "I cannot too highly approve of your conduct, or too warmly applaud the mastery you display over your feelings. But—" and he hesitated.

"But what, father?" cried Viviana eagerly. "Do you think I have done wrong in dismissing him?"

"By no means, dear daughter," replied the priest. "You have acted most discreetly. But you will forgive me if I urge you—nay, implore you not to take the veil; but rather to bestow your hand upon some Catholic gentleman——"

"Such as Mr. Catesby," interrupted Viviana, glancing in the direction of the individual she mentioned, who was watching them narrowly from the further end of the room.

"Ay, Mr. Catesby," repeated Oldcorne, affecting not to notice the scornful emphasis laid on the name. "None more fitting could be found, nor more worthy of you. Our Church has not a more zealous servant and upholder; and he will be at once a father and a husband to you. Such a union would be highly profitable to our religion. And, though it is well for those whose hearts are burthened with affliction, and who are unable to render any active service to their faith, to retire from the world, it behoves every sister of the Romish Church to support it at a juncture like the present, at any sacrifice of personal feeling."

"Urge me no more, father," replied Viviana, firmly. "I will make every sacrifice for my religion, consistent with principle and feeling. But I will not make this; neither am I required to make it. And I beg you will entreat Mr. Catesby to desist from further importunity."

Oldcorne bowed, and retired. Nor was another syllable exchanged between them prior to their departure.

Crossing the old bridge over the Dee, then

defended at each extremity by a gate and tower, the party took the road to Holt, where they arrived in about an hour. The recent conversation had thrown a restraint over them, which was not removed during the journey. Habitually taciturn, as has already been remarked, Guy Fawkes seemed gloomier and more thoughtful than ever; and though he rode by the side of Viviana, he did not volunteer a remark, and scarcely appeared conscious of her presence. Catesby and Oldcorne kept aloof, and it was not until they came in sight of the little town which formed their destination that the former galloped forward, and striking into the path on the right begged Viviana to follow him. A turn in the road shortly afterwards showed them a large mansion screened by a grove of beech trees.

"That is the house to which we are going," observed Catesby.

And as he spoke, they approached a lodge, the gates of which being opened by an attendant, admitted them to the avenue.

Viviana's heart throbbed with delight at the

anticipated meeting with her father; but she could not repress a feeling of anxiety at the distressing intelligence she had to impart to him. As she drew near the house she perceived him walking beneath the shade of the trees with two other persons; and quickening her pace, sprang from her steed, and almost before he was aware of it was in his arms.

"Why do I see you here so unexpectedly, my dear child?" cried Sir William Radcliffe, as soon as he had recovered from the surprise which her sudden appearance occasioned him. "Mr. Catesby only left this morning, charged with a letter entreating you to set out without delay,—and now I behold you. What has happened?"

Viviana then recounted the occurrences of the last few days.

"It is as I feared," replied Sir William, in a desponding tone. "Our oppressors will never cease till they drive us to desperation!"

"They will not!" rejoined a voice behind him. "Well may we exclaim with the prophet —'How long, O Lord, shall I cry, and thou

wilt not hear? Shall I cry out to thee suffering violence, and thou wilt not save? Why hast thou showed me iniquity and grievance, to see rapine and injustice before me? Why lookest thou upon them that do unjust things, and holdest thy peace when the wicked devoureth the man that is more just than himself?' "

Viviana looked in the direction of the speaker and beheld a man in a priestly garb, whose countenance struck her forcibly. He was rather under the middle height, of a slight spare figure, and in age might be about fifty. His features, which in his youth must have been pleasing, if not handsome, and which were still regular, were pale and emaciated; but his eye was dark, and of unusual brilliancy. A single glance at this person satisfied her it was Father Garnet, the provincial of the English Jesuits; nor was she mistaken in her supposition.

Of this remarkable person, so intimately connected with the main events of the history about to be related, it may be proper to offer some preliminary account. Born at Nottingham in 1554, in the reign of Queen Mary, and of

obscure parentage, Henry Garnet was originally destined to the Protestant Church, and educated, with a view to taking orders, at Winchester school, whence it was intended he should be removed in due course to Oxford. But this design was never carried into effect. Influenced by motives, into which it is now scarcely worth while inquiring, and which have been contested by writers on both sides of the question, Garnet proceeded from Winchester to London, where he engaged himself as corrector of the press to a printer of law-books, named Tottel, in which capacity he became acquainted with Sir Edward Coke and Chief Justice Popham, — one of whom was afterwards to be the leading counsel against him, and the other his judge. After continuing in this employment for two years, during which he had meditated a change in his religion, he went abroad, and travelling first to Madrid, and then to Rome, saw enough of the Catholic priesthood to confirm his resolution, and in 1575 he assumed the habit of a Jesuit. Pursuing his studies with the utmost zeal and ardour at the Jesuits' College, under

the celebrated Bellarmine, and the no less celebrated Clavius, he made such progress, that upon the indisposition of the latter, he was able to fill the mathematical chair. Nor was he less skilled in philosophy, metaphysics, and divinity; and his knowledge of Hebrew was so profound, that he taught it publicly in the Roman schools.

To an enthusiastic zeal in the cause of the religion he had espoused, Garnet added great powers of persuasion and eloquence,—a combination of qualities well fitting him for the office of a missionary priest; and undismayed by the dangers he would have to encounter, and eager to propagate his doctrines, he solicited to be sent on this errand to his own country. At the instance of Father Persons, he received an appointment to the mission in 1586, and he secretly landed in England in the same year. Braving every danger, and shrinking from no labour, he sought on all hands to make proselytes to the ancient faith, and to sustain the wavering courage of its professors. Two years afterwards, on the imprisonment of the Superior of the Jesuits, being raised to that important post, he was

enabled to extend his sphere of action; and redoubling his exertions in consequence, he so well discharged his duties, that it was mainly owing to him that the Catholic party was kept together during the fierce persecutions of the latter end of Elizabeth's reign.

Compelled to personate various characters, as he travelled from place to place, Garnet had acquired a remarkable facility for disguise; and such was his address and courage, that he not unfrequently imposed upon the very officers sent in pursuit of him. Up to the period of Elizabeth's demise, he had escaped arrest; and, though involved in the treasonable intrigue with the King of Spain, and other conspiracies, he procured a general pardon under the great seal. His office and profession naturally brought him into contact with the chief Catholic families throughout the kingdom; and he maintained an active correspondence with many of them, by means of his various agents and emissaries. The great object of his life being the restoration of the fallen religion, to accomplish this, as he conceived, great and desirable end, he was prepared

to adopt any means, however violent or obnoxious. When, under the seal of confession, Catesby revealed to him his dark designs, so far from discouraging him, all he counselled was caution. Having tested the disposition of the wealthier Romanists to rise against their oppressors, and finding a general insurrection, as has before been stated, impracticable, he gave every encouragement and assistance to the conspiracy forming among the more desperate and discontented of the party. At his instigation, the present pilgrimage to Saint Winifred's Well was undertaken, in the hope that, when so large a body of the Catholics were collected together, some additional aid to the project might be obtained.

One of the most mysterious and inexplicable portions of Garnet's history is that relating to Anne Vaux. This lady, the daughter of Lord Vaux of Harrowden, a rigid Catholic nobleman, and one of Garnet's earliest patrons and friends, on the death of her father, in 1595, attached herself to his fortunes,—accompanied him in all his missions,—shared all his privations and dan-

gers,—and, regardless of calumny or reproach, devoted herself entirely to his service. What is not less singular, her sister, who had married a Catholic gentleman named Brooksby, became his equally zealous attendant. Their enthusiasm produced a similar effect on Mr. Brooksby; and wherever Garnet went, all three accompanied him.

By his side, on the present occasion, stood Sir Everard Digby. Accounted one of the handsomest, most accomplished, and best-informed men of his time, Sir Everard, at the period of this history only twenty-four, had married, when scarcely sixteen, Maria, heiress of the ancient and honourable family of Mulshoe, with whom he obtained a large fortune, and the magnificent estate of Gothurst, or Gaythurst, in Buckinghamshire. Knighted by James the First at Belvoir Castle, on his way from Scotland to London, Digby, who had once formed one of the most brilliant ornaments of the court, had of late in a great degree retired from it. "Notwithstanding," writes Father Greenway, "that he had dwelt much in the Queen's court, and

was in the way of obtaining honours and distinction by his graceful manners and rare parts, he chose rather to bear the cross with the persecuted Catholics, *et vivere abjectus in domo Domini*, than to sail through the pleasures of a palace and the prosperities of the world, to the shipwreck of his conscience and the destruction of his soul." Having only when he completed his minority professed the Catholic religion, he became deeply concerned at its fallen state, and his whole thoughts were bent upon its restoration. This change in feeling was occasioned chiefly, if not altogether, by Garnet, by whom his conversion had been accomplished.

Sir Everard Digby was richly attired in a black velvet doublet, with sleeves slashed with white satin, and wore a short mantle of the same material, similarly lined. He had the enormous trunk hose heretofore mentioned as the distinguishing peculiarity of the costume of the period, and wore black velvet shoes, ornamented with white roses. An ample ruff encircled his throat. His hat was steeple-crowned, and somewhat broader in the leaf than was ordinarily worn,

and shaded with a plume of black feathers. His hair was raven-black, and he wore a pointed beard, and mustaches. His figure was tall and stately, and his features grave and finely formed.

By this time the group had been joined by the others, and a friendly greeting took place. Guy Fawkes was presented by Catesby to Sir William Radcliffe and Sir Everard Digby. To Garnet he required no introduction, and Father Oldcorne was known to all. After a little further conversation, the party adjourned to the house which belonged to a Welsh Catholic gentleman, named Griffiths, who, though absent at the time, had surrendered it to the use of Sir Everard Digby and his friends.

On their entrance, Viviana was introduced by her father to Lady Digby, who presided as hostess, and welcomed her with great cordiality. She was then conducted to her own room, where she was speedily joined by Sir William, and they remained closeted together till summoned to the principal meal of the day. At the table, which was most hospitably served, Viviana found, in addition to her former companions, a large assem-

blage, to most of whom she was a stranger, consisting of Anne Vaux, Mr. Brooksby and his wife, Ambrose Rookwood, two brothers named Winter, two Wrights, Francis Tresham,—persons of whom it will be necessary to make particular mention hereafter,—and several others, in all amounting to thirty.

The meal over, the company dispersed, and Viviana and her father, passing through an open window, wandered forth upon a beautiful and spreading lawn, and thence under the shade of the beech-trees. They had not been long here, anxiously conferring on recent events, when they perceived Garnet and Catesby approaching.

"Father, dear father!" cried Viviana, hastily, "I was about to warn you; but I have not time to do so now. Some dark and dangerous plot is in agitation to restore our religion. Mr. Catesby is anxious to league you with it. Do not—do not yield to his solicitations!"

"Fear nothing on that score, Viviana," replied Sir William, "I have already perplexities enow, without adding to them."

"I will leave you, then," she replied. And,

as soon as the others came up, she made some excuse for withdrawing, and returned to the house. The window of her chamber commanded the avenue, and from it she watched the group. They remained for a long time pacing up and down, in earnest conversation. By and by, they were joined by Oldcorne and Fawkes. Then came a third party, consisting of the Winters and Wrights; and, lastly, Sir Everard Digby and Tresham swelled the list.

The assemblage was then harangued by Catesby, and the most profound attention paid to his address. Viviana kept her eye fixed upon her father's countenance, and from its changing expression inferred what effect the speech produced upon him. At its conclusion, the assemblage separated in little groups; and she perceived, with great uneasiness, that Father Garnet passed his arm through that of her father, and led him away. Some time elapsed, and neither of them re-appeared.

"My warning was in vain, he *has* joined them!" she exclaimed.

"No, Viviana!" cried her father's voice be-

hind her. "I have *not* joined them. Nor *shall* I do so."

"Heaven be praised!" she exclaimed, flinging her arms around his neck.

Neither of them were aware that they were overheard by Garnet, who had noiselessly followed Sir William into the room, and muttered to himself—"For all this, he *shall* join the plot, and she *shall* wed Catesby."

He then coughed slightly, to announce his presence; and, apologizing to Viviana for the intrusion, told her he came to confess her previously to the celebration of mass, which would take place that evening, in a small chapel in the house. Wholly obedient to the command of her spiritual advisers, Viviana instantly signified her assent; and, her father having withdrawn, she laid open the inmost secrets of her heart to the Jesuit. Severely reprobating her love for a heretic, before he would give her absolution, Garnet enjoined her, as a penance, to walk barefoot to the holy well on the morrow, and to make a costly offering at the shrine of the saint. Com-

pliance being promised to his injunction, he pronounced the absolution, and departed.

Soon after this, mass was celebrated by Garnet, and the sacrament administered to the assemblage.

An hour before daybreak, the party again assembled in the chapel, where matins were performed; after which, the female devotees, who were clothed in snow-white woollen robes, with wide sleeves and hoods, and having large black crosses woven in front, retired for a short time, and re-appeared, with their feet bared, and hair unbound. Each had a large rosary attached to the cord that bound her waist.

Catesby thought Viviana had never appeared so lovely as in this costume; and as he gazed at her white and delicately formed feet, her small rounded ankles, her dark and abundant tresses falling in showers almost to the ground, he became more deeply enamoured than before. His passionate gaze was, however, unnoticed, as the object of it kept her eyes steadily fixed on the ground. Lady Digby, who was a most beautiful

woman, scarcely appeared to less advantage; and, as she walked side by side with Viviana in the procession, the pair attracted universal admiration from all who beheld them.

Everything being at last in readiness, and the order of march fully arranged, two youthful choristers, in surplices, chanting a hymn to Saint Winifred, set forth. They were followed by two men bearing silken banners, on one of which was displayed the martyrdom of the saint whose shrine they were about to visit, and on the other a lamb carrying a cross; next came Fathers Oldcorne and Fisher, each sustaining a large silver crucifix; next, Garnet alone, in the full habit of his order; next, the females, in the attire before described, and walking two and two; next, Sir Everard Digby, and Sir William Radcliffe; and lastly, the rest of the pilgrims, to the number of fourteen. These were all on foot. But at the distance of fifty paces behind them rode Guy Fawkes and Catesby, at the head of twenty well-armed and well-mounted attendants, intended to serve as a guard in case of need.

In such order, this singular procession moved

forward at a slow pace, taking its course along a secluded road leading to the ridge of hills extending from the neighbourhood of Wrexham to Mold, and from thence, in an almost unbroken chain, to Holywell.

Along these heights, whence magnificent views were obtained of the broad estuary of the Dee and the more distant ocean, the train proceeded without interruption ; and though the road selected was one seldom traversed, and through a country thinly peopled, still, the rumour of the pilgrimage having gone abroad, hundreds were stationed at different points to behold it. Some expressions of disapprobation were occasionally manifested by the spectators ; but the presence of the large armed force effectually prevented any interference.

Whenever such a course could be pursued, the procession took its way over the sward. Still the sufferings of the females were severe in the extreme ; and before Viviana had proceeded a mile, her white, tender feet were cut and bruised by the sharp flints over which she walked ; every step she took leaving a bloody print behind

it. Lady Digby was in little better condition. But such was the zeal by which they, in common with all the other devotees following them, were animated, that not a single murmur was uttered.

Proceeding in this way, they reached at mid-day a small stone chapel on the summit of the hill overlooking Plas-Newydd, where they halted, and devotions being performed, the females bathed their lacerated limbs in a neighbouring brook, after which they were rubbed with a cooling and odorous ointment. Thus refreshed, they again set forward, and halting a second time at Plas-Isaf, where similar religious ceremonies were observed, they rested for the day at a lodging prepared for their reception in the vicinity of Mold.

The night being passed in prayer, early in the morning they commenced their march in the same order as before. When Viviana first set her feet to the ground, she felt as if she were treading on hot iron, and the pain she endured was so excruciating, that she could not repress a cry.

"Heed not your sufferings, dear daughter,"

observed Garnet, compassionately. "The waters of the holy fountain will heal the wounds both of soul and body."

Overcoming her agony by a powerful effort, she contrived to limp forward; and the whole party was soon after in motion. Halting for two hours at Pentre-Terfyn, and again at Skeviog, the train, towards evening, reached the summit of the hill overlooking Holywell, at the foot of which could be seen the ruins of Basingwerk Abbey, and the roof of the ancient chapel erected over the sacred spring. At this sight, those who were foremost in the procession fell on their knees; and the horsemen dismounting, imitated their example. An earnest supplication to Saint Winifred was then poured forth by Father Garnet, in which all the others joined, and a hymn in her honour chanted by the choristers.

Their devotions ended, the whole train arose, and walked slowly down the steep descent. As they entered the little town, which owes its name and celebrity to the miraculous spring rising within it, they were met by a large concourse

of people, who had flocked from Flint and the other neighbouring places to witness the ceremonial. Most of the inhabitants of Holywell, holding their saintly patroness in the deepest veneration, viewed this pilgrimage to her shrine as a proper tribute of respect, while those of the opposite faith were greatly impressed by it. As the procession advanced, the crowd divided into two lines to allow it passage, and many fell on their knees imploring a blessing from Garnet, which he in no instance refused. When within a hundred yards of the sacred well, they were met by a priest, followed by another small train of pilgrims. A Latin oration having been pronounced by this priest, and replied to in the same language by Garnet, the train was once more put in motion, and presently reached the ancient fabric built over the sacred fountain.

The legend of Saint Winifred is so well known, that it is scarcely necessary to repeat it. For the benefit of the uninformed, however, it may be stated that she flourished about the middle of the seventh century, and was the daughter of Thewith, one of the chief lords of Wales. De-

voutly educated by a monk named Beuno, who afterwards received canonization, she took the veil, and retired to a small monastery (the ruins of which still exist), built by her father near the scene of her subsequent martyrdom. Persecuted by the addresses of Caradoc, son of Alan, Prince of Wales, she fled from him to avoid his violence. He followed, and inflamed by fury at her resistance, struck off her head. For this atrocity, the earth instantly opened and swallowed him alive, while from the spot where the head had fallen gushed forth a fountain of unequalled force and purity, producing more than a hundred tons a minute. The bottom of this miraculous well is strewn with pebbles streaked with red veins, in memory of the virgin saint from whose blood it sprung. On its margin grows an odorous moss, while its gelid and translucent waters are esteemed a remedy for many disorders. Winifred's career did not terminate with her decapitation. Resuscitated by the prayers of Saint Beuno, she lived many years a life of the utmost sanctity, bearing, as a mark of the miracle performed

in her behalf, a narrow crimson circle round her throat.

Passing the chapel adjoining the well, built in the reign of Henry the Seventh by his mother, the pious Countess of Richmond, the pilgrims came to the swift clear stream rushing from the well. Instead of ascending the steps leading to the edifice built over the spring, they plunged into the stream, and crossing it entered the structure by a doorway on the further side. Erected by the Countess of Richmond at the same period as the chapel, this structure, quadrangular in form, and of great beauty, consists of light clustered pillars and mouldings, supporting the most gorgeous tracery and groining, the whole being ornamented with sculptured bosses, pendent capitals, fretwork, niches, and tabernacles. In the midst is a large stone basin, to receive the water of the fountain, around which the procession now grouped, and as soon as all were assembled, at the command of Father Garnet they fell on their knees.

It was a solemn and striking sight to see this large group prostrated around that beautiful

fountain, and, covered by that ancient structure, —a touching thing to hear the voice of prayer mingling with the sound of the rushing water. After this, they all arose. A hymn was then chanted, and votive offerings made at the shrine of the saint. The male portion of the assemblage then followed Garnet to the chapel, where further religious rites were performed, while the female devotees, remaining near the fountain, resigned themselves to the care of several attendants of their own sex, who, having bathed their feet in the water, applied some of the fragrant moss above described to the wounds; and, such was the faith of the patients, or the virtue of the application, that in a short time they all felt perfectly restored, and able to join their companions in the chapel. In this way, the evening was spent; and it was not until late that they finished their devotions, and departed to the lodgings provided for them in the town.

Impressed with a strange superstitious feeling, which he would scarcely acknowledge to himself, Guy Fawkes determined to pass the night

near the well. Accordingly, without communicating his intention to his companions, he threw a small knapsack over his shoulder, containing a change of linen, and a few articles of attire, and proceeded thither.

It was a brilliant moonlight night, and, as the radiance, streaming through the thin clustered columns of the structure, lighted up its fairy architecture, and fell upon the clear cold waves of the fountain, revealing the blood-streaked pebbles beneath, the effect was inexpressibly beautiful. So charmed was Guy Fawkes by the sight, that he remained for some time standing near the edge of the basin, as if fascinated by the marvellous spring that boiled up and sparkled at his feet. Resolved to try the efficacy of the bath, he threw off his clothes and plunged into it. The water was cold as ice; but on emerging from it he felt wonderfully refreshed. Having dressed himself, he wrapped his cloak around him, and throwing himself on the stone floor, placed the knapsack under his head, and grasping a petronel in his right



Vision of Guy Fawkes at Saint Winifred's Well

hand, to be ready in case of a surprise, disposed himself to slumber.

Accustomed to a soldier's couch, he soon fell asleep. He had not long closed his eyes when he dreamed that from out the well, a female figure, slight and unsubstantial as the element from which it sprang, arose. It was robed in what resembled a nun's garb; but so thin and vapoury, that the very moonlight shone through it. From the garments of the figure, as well as from the crimson circle round its throat, he knew that it must be the patroness of the place, the sainted Winifred, that he beheld. He felt no terror, but the deepest awe. The arm of the figure was raised,—its benignant regards fixed upon him,—and, as soon as it gained the level of the basin, it glided towards him.

CHAPTER XII.

THE VISION.

Before daybreak on the following morning, Garnet, who had been engaged in earnest conference with Catesby during the whole of the night, repaired to the sacred spring for the purpose of bathing within it, and performing his solitary devotions at the shrine of the saint. On ascending the steps of the structure, he perceived Guy Fawkes kneeling beside the fountain, apparently occupied in prayer; and, being unwilling to disturb him, he paused. Finding, however, after the lapse of a few minutes, that he did not move, he advanced towards him, and was about to lay his hand upon his shoulder, when he was arrested by the very extraordinary expression of his countenance. His lips were partly open, but perfect-

ly motionless, and his eyes, almost starting from their sockets, were fixed upon the boiling waters of the spring. His hands were clasped, and his look altogether was that of one whose faculties were benumbed by awe or terror.

Aware of the fanatical and enthusiastic character of Fawkes, Garnet had little doubt that, by keeping long vigil at the fountain, he had worked himself into such a state of over-excitement as to imagine he beheld some preternatural appearance; and it was with some curiosity that he awaited the result. Glancing in the same direction, his eye rested upon the bottom of the well, but he could discern nothing except the glittering and blood-streaked pebbles, and the reflection of the early sunbeams that quivered on its steaming surface. At length, a convulsion passed over the frame of the kneeler, and heaving a deep sigh he arose. Turning to quit the spring, he confronted Garnet, and demanded in a low voice,

"Have you likewise seen the vision, father?"

Garnet made no reply, but regarded him steadfastly.

"Has the blessed Winifred appeared to you, I say?" continued Fawkes.

"No," answered Garnet; "I am but just come hither. It is for you, my son, — the favoured of Heaven,—for whom such glorious visions are reserved. I have seen nothing. How did the saint manifest herself to you?"

"In her earthly form," replied Fawkes; "or rather, I should say, in the semblance of the form she bore on earth. Listen to me, father. I came hither last night to make my couch beside the fountain. After plunging into it, I felt marvellously refreshed, and disposed myself to rest on that stone. Scarcely had my eyes closed when the saintly virgin appeared to me. Oh! father, it was a vision of seraphic beauty, such as the eye of man hath seldom seen!"

"And such only as it is permitted the elect of Heaven to see," observed Garnet.

"Alas! father," rejoined Guy Fawkes, "I can lay little claim to such an epithet. Nay, I begin to fear that I have incurred the displeasure of Heaven."

"Think not so, my son," replied Garnet, un-

easily. "Relate your vision, and I will interpret it to you."

"Thus then it was, father," returned Fawkes. "The figure of the saint arose from out the well, and gliding towards me laid its finger upon my brow. My eyes opened, but I was as one oppressed with a nightmare, unable to move. I then thought I heard my name pronounced by a voice so wondrously sweet that my senses were quite ravished. Fain would I have prostrated myself, but my limbs refused their office. Neither could I speak, for my tongue was also enchained."

"Proceed, my son," observed Garnet; "I am curious to know what ensued."

"Father," replied Guy Fawkes, "if the form I beheld was that of Saint Winifred,—and that it was so, I cannot doubt,—the enterprise on which we are engaged will fail. It is *not* approved by Heaven. The vision warned me to desist."

"You cannot desist, my son," rejoined Garnet, sternly. "Your oath binds you to the project."

"True," replied Fawkes; "and I have no

thought of abandoning it. But I am well assured it will not be successful."

"Your thinking so, my son, will be the most certain means of realizing your apprehensions," replied Garnet, gravely. "But let me hear the exact words of the spirit. You may have misunderstood them."

"I cannot repeat them precisely, father," replied Fawkes; "but I could not misapprehend their import, which was the deepest commiseration for our forlorn and fallen church, but a positive interdiction against any attempt to restore it by bloodshed. 'Suffer on,' said the spirit; 'bear the yoke patiently, and in due season God will avenge your wrongs, and free you from oppression. You are thus afflicted that your faith may be purified. But if you resort to violence, you will breed confusion, and injure, not serve, the holy cause on which you are embarked.' Such, father, was the language of the saint. It was uttered in a tone so tender and sympathizing, that every word found an echo in my heart, and I repented having pledged myself to the undertaking. But, when I tell you that she added

that all concerned in the conspiracy should perish, perhaps you may be deterred from proceeding further."

"Never!" returned Garnet. "Nor will I suffer any one engaged in it to retreat. What matter if a few perish, if the many survive? Our blood will not be shed in vain, if the true religion of God is restored. Nay, as strongly as the blessed Winifred herself resisted the impious ravisher, Caradoc, will I resist all inducements to turn aside from my purpose. It may be that the enterprise *will* fail. It may be that we *shall* perish. But if we die thus, we shall die as martyrs, and our deaths will be highly profitable to the Catholic religion."

"I doubt it," observed Fawkes.

"My son," said Garnet, solemnly, "I have ever looked upon you as one destined to be the chief agent in the great work of redemption. I have thought that, like Judith, you were chosen to destroy the Holofernes who oppresses us. Having noted in you a religious fervour, and resolution admirably fitting you for the task, I thought, and still think you expressly chosen

by Heaven for it. But, if you have any misgiving, I beseech you to withdraw from it. I will absolve you from your oath; and, enjoining you only to strictest secrecy, will pray you to depart at once, lest your irresolution should be communicated to the others."

"Fear nothing from me, father," rejoined Fawkes. "I have no irresolution, no wavering, nor shall any engaged with us be shaken by my apprehension. You have asked me what I saw and heard, and I have told you truly. But I will speak of it no more."

"It will be well to observe silence, my son," answered Garnet; "for though you, like myself, are unnerved, its effect on others might be injurious. But you have not yet brought your relation to an end. How did the figure disappear?"

"As it arose, father," replied Fawkes. "Uttering in a sweet but solemn voice, which yet rings in my ears, the words, 'Be warned!' it glided back to the fountain, whose waves as it approached grew still, and gradually melted from my view."

"But when I came hither, you appeared to be gazing at the spring," said Garnet. "What did you then behold?"

"My first impulse on awaking about an hour ago," replied Fawkes, "was to prostrate myself before the fountain, and to entreat the intercession of the saint, who had thus marvellously revealed herself to me. As I prayed, methought its clear lucid waters became turbid, and turned to the colour of blood."

"It is a type of the blood of slaughtered brethren of our faith, which has been shed by our oppressors," rejoined Garnet.

"Rather of our own, which shall be poured forth in this cause," retorted Fawkes. "No matter. I am prepared to lose the last drop of mine."

"And I," said Garnet; "and, I doubt not, like those holy men who have suffered for their faith, that we shall both win a crown of martyrdom."

"Amen!" exclaimed Fawkes. "And you think the sacrifice we are about to offer will prove acceptable to God?"

"I am convinced of it, my son," answered Garnet. "And I take the sainted virgin, from whose blood this marvellous spring was produced, to witness that I devote myself unhesitatingly to the project, and that I firmly believe it will profit our church."

As he spoke, a singular circumstance occurred, which did not fail to produce an impression on both parties,—especially Guy Fawkes. A violent gust of wind, apparently suddenly aroused, whistled through the slender columns of the structure, and catching the surface of the water dashed it in tiny waves against their feet.

"The saint is offended," observed Fawkes.

"It would almost seem so," replied Garnet, after a pause. "Let us proceed to the chapel, and pray at her shrine. We will confer on this matter hereafter. Meantime, swear to me that you will observe profound secrecy respecting this vision."

"I swear," replied Guy Fawkes.

At this moment, another and more violent gust agitated the fountain.

"We will tarry here no longer," said Garnet.

"I am not proof against these portents of ill."

So saying, he led the way to the chapel. Here they were presently joined by several of the female devotees, including Viviana, Anne Vaux, and Lady Digby. Matins were then said, after which various offerings were made at the shrine of the saint. Lady Digby presented a small tablet set in gold, representing on one side the martyrdom of Saint Winifred, and on the other the Salutation of our Lady. Anne Vaux gave a small enamelled cross of gold; Viviana a girdle of the same metal, with a pendant sustaining a small Saint John's head surrounded with pearls.

"Mine will be a poor soldier's offering," said Guy Fawkes, approaching the shrine, which was hung around with the crutches, staves, and bandages of those cured by the healing waters of the miraculous spring. "This small silver scallop-shell, given me by a pilgrim, who died in my arms near the chapel of Saint James of Compostella, in Spain, is the sole valuable I possess."

"It will be as acceptable as a more costly gift, my son," replied Garnet, placing it on the shrine.

Of all the offerings then made, that silver scallop-shell is the only one preserved.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CONSPIRATORS.

On Viviana's return from her devotions, she found her father in the greatest perturbation and alarm. The old steward, Heydocke, who had ridden express from Ordsall Hall, had just arrived, bringing word that the miserable fate of the pursuivant and his crew had aroused the whole country; that officers, attended by a strong force, and breathing vengeance, were in pursuit of Sir William Radcliffe and his daughter; that large sums were offered for the capture of Guy Fawkes and Father Oldcorne; that most of the servants were imprisoned; that he himself had escaped with great difficulty; and that, to sum up this long catalogue of calamities, Master Humphrey Chetham was arrested, and

placed in the New Fleet. "In short, my dear young mistress," concluded the old man, "as I have just observed to Sir William, all is over with us, and there is nothing left but the grave."

"What course have you resolved upon, dear father?" inquired Viviana, turning anxiously to him.

"I shall surrender myself," he answered. "I am guilty of no crime, and can easily clear myself from all imputation."

"You are mistaken," she replied. "Do not hope for justice from those who know it not. But, while the means of escape are allowed you, avail yourself of them."

"No, Viviana," replied Sir William Radcliffe, firmly; "my part is taken. I shall abide the arrival of the officers. For you, I shall intrust you to the care of Mr. Catesby."

"You cannot mean this, dear father," she cried, with a look of distress. "And, if you do, I will never consent to such an arrangement."

"Mr. Catesby is strongly attached to you, child," replied Sir William, "and will watch over

your safety as carefully as I could do myself."

"He may be attached to me," rejoined Viviana, "though I doubt the disinterestedness of his love. But nothing can remove my repugnance to him. Forgive me, therefore, if, in this one instance I decline to obey your commands. I dare not trust myself with Mr. Catesby."

"How am I to understand you?" inquired Sir William.

"Do not ask me to explain, dear father," she answered, "but imagine I must have good reason for what I say. Since you are resolved upon surrendering yourself, I will go into captivity with you. The alternative is less dreadful than that you have proposed."

"You distract me, child," cried the knight, rising and pacing the chamber in great agitation. "I cannot bear the thought of your imprisonment. Yet if I fly, I appear to confess myself guilty."

"If your worship will intrust Mistress Viviana with me," interposed the old steward, "I will convey her whithersoever you direct,—will

watch over her day and night,—and, if need be, die in her defence."

"Thou wert ever a faithful servant, good Heydocke," rejoined Sir William, extending his hand kindly to him, "and art as true in adversity as in prosperity."

"Shame to me if I were not," replied Heydocke, pressing the knight's fingers to his lips and bathing them in his tears. "Shame to me if I hesitated to lay down my life for a master to whom I owe so much."

"If it is your pleasure, dear father," observed Viviana, "I will accompany Master Heydocke; but I would far rather be permitted to remain with you."

"It would avail nothing," replied Sir William, "we should be separated by the officers. Retire to your chamber, and prepare for instant departure; and, in the mean while, I will consider what is best to be done."

"Your worship's decision must be speedy," observed Heydocke: "I had only a few hours' start of the officers. They will be here ere long."

"Take this purse," replied Sir William, "and hire three of the fleetest horses you can procure, and station yourself at the outskirts of the town, on the road to Saint Asaph. You understand."

"Perfectly," replied Heydocke. And he departed to execute his master's commands, while Viviana withdrew to her own chamber.

Left alone, the knight was perplexing himself as to where he should shape his course, when he was interrupted by the sudden entrance of Catesby and Garnet.

"We have just met your servant, Sir William," said the former, "and have learnt the alarming intelligence he has brought."

"What is your counsel in this emergency, father?" said Radcliffe, appealing to Garnet.

"Flight,—instant flight, my son," was the answer.

"My counsel is resistance," said Catesby. "We are here assembled in large numbers, and are well armed. Let us await the arrival of the officers, and see whether they will venture to arrest you."

"They will arrest us all, if they have force

sufficient to do so," replied Garnet; "and there are many reasons, as you well know, why it is desirable to avoid any disturbance at present."

"True," replied Catesby. "What say you then," he continued, addressing Radcliffe, "to our immediate return to Holt, where means may be found to screen you till this storm is blown over?"

Sir William having assented to the proposal, Catesby instantly departed to acquaint the others, and, as soon as preparations could be made, and horses procured, the whole party composing the pilgrimage, quitted Holywell, and, ascending the hill at the back of the town took the direction of Mold, where they arrived, having ridden at a swift pace, in about half an hour. From thence they proceeded, without accident or interruption, to the mansion they had recently occupied near Holt. On reaching it, all the domestics were armed, and certain of their number stationed at the different approaches to the house to give the alarm in case of the enemy's appearance.

But as nothing occurred during the night, the fears of Sir William and his friends began in some degree to subside.

About noon, on the following day, as Guy Fawkes, who ever since the vision at Saint Winifred's Well had shunned all companionship, walked forth beneath the avenue alone, he heard a light step behind him, and, turning, beheld Viviana. Gravely bowing, he was about to pursue his course, when quickening her pace she was instantly by his side.

"I have a favour to solicit," she said.

"There is none I would refuse you," answered Fawkes, halting; "but, though I have the will, I may not have the power to grant your request."

"Hear me, then," she replied, hurriedly. "Of all my father's friends—of all who are here assembled, you are the only one I dare trust,—the only one from whom I can hope for assistance."

"I am at once flattered and perplexed by your words, Viviana," he rejoined; "nor can I guess

whither they tend. But speak freely. If I cannot render you aid, I can at least give you counsel."

"I must premise, then," said Viviana, "that I am aware from certain obscure hints let fall by Father Oldcorne, that you, Mr. Catesby, and others are engaged in a dark and dangerous conspiracy."

"Viviana Radcliffe," returned Guy Fawkes, sternly, "you have once before avowed your knowledge of this plot. I will not attempt disguise with you. A project is in agitation for the deliverance of our fallen church; and, since you have become acquainted with its existence—no matter how—you must be bound by an oath of secrecy, or," and his look grew darker, and his voice sterner, "I will not answer for your life."

"I will willingly take the oath, on certain conditions," said Viviana.

"You must take it unconditionally," rejoined Fawkes.

"Hear me out," said Viviana. "Knowing that Mr. Catesby and Father Garnet are anxious to induce my father to join this conspiracy, I

came hither to implore you to prevent him from doing so."

"Were I even willing to do this,—which I am not," replied Fawkes, "I have not the power. Sir William Radcliffe would be justly indignant at any interference on my part."

"Heed not that," replied Viviana. "You, I fear, are linked to this fearful project beyond the possibility of being set free. But he is not. Save him! save him!"

"I will take no part in urging him to join it," replied Fawkes. "But I can promise nothing further."

"Then mark me," she returned; "if further attempts are made by any of your confederates to league him with their plot, I myself will disclose all I know of it."

"Viviana," rejoined Fawkes, in a threatening tone, "I again warn you that you endanger your life."

"I care not," she rejoined; "I would risk twenty lives, if I possessed them, to preserve my father."

"You are a noble-hearted lady," replied

Fawkes, unable to repress the admiration inspired by her conduct; "and if I can accomplish what you desire, I will. But I see not how it can be done."

"Everything is possible to one of your resolution," replied Viviana.

"Well, well," replied Fawkes, a slight smile crossing his rugged features; "the effort at least shall be made."

"Thanks! thanks!" ejaculated Viviana; and, overcome by her emotion, she sank half-fainting into his arms.

While he held her thus, debating within himself whether he should convey her to the house, Garnet and Catesby appeared at the other end of the avenue. Their surprise at the sight was extreme; nor was it less when Viviana, opening her eyes as they drew near, uttered a slight cry, and disappeared.

"This requires an explanation," said Catesby, glancing fiercely at Fawkes.

"You must seek it, then, of the lady," rejoined the latter, moodily.

"It will be easily explained, I have no doubt,"

interposed Garnet. "Miss Radcliffe was seized with a momentary weakness, and her companion offered her support."

"That will scarcely suffice for me," cried Catesby.

"Let the subject be dropped for the present," rejoined Garnet, authoritatively. "More important matter claims our attention. We came to seek you, my son," he continued, addressing Fawkes. "All those engaged in the great enterprise are about to meet in a summer-house in the garden."

"I am ready to attend you," replied Fawkes. "Will Sir William Radcliffe be there?"

"No," replied Garnet; "he has not yet joined us. None will be present at this meeting but the sworn conspirators."

With this, the trio took their way towards the garden, and proceeding along a walk edged with clipped yew-trees, came to the summer-house,—a small circular building overrun with ivy and creepers, and ornamented in front by two stone statues on pedestals. Here they found Sir Everard Digby, Ambrose Rookwood, Francis

Tresham, Thomas and Robert Winter, John and Christopher Wright, awaiting their arrival.

The door being closed and bolted, Garnet, placing himself in the midst of the assemblage, said, "Before we proceed further, I will again administer the oath to all present." Drawing from his vest a primer, and addressing Sir Everard Digby, he desired him to kneel, and continued thus in a solemn tone, "You shall swear by the Blessed Trinity, and by the sacrament you propose to receive, never to disclose directly nor indirectly, by word or circumstance, the matter that shall be proposed to you to keep secret, nor desist from the execution thereof, until the rest shall give you leave."

"I swear," replied Digby, kissing the primer.

The oath was then taken in like manner by the others. This done, Catesby was about to address the meeting, when Tresham, glancing uneasily at the door, remarked, "Are you assured we have no eavesdroppers?"

"I will keep watch without," rejoined Fawkes, "if you have any fears."

"It were better," replied Robert Winter.

"We cannot be too cautious. But if you go forth, you will not be able to take part in the discussion."

"My part is to act, not talk," rejoined Fawkes, marching towards the door. And shutting it after him, he took up his position outside.

Upon this Catesby commenced a long and inflammatory harangue, in which he expatiated with great eloquence and fervour on the wrongs of the Catholic party, and the deplorable condition of their church. "It were easy to slay the tyrant by whom we are oppressed," he said, in conclusion; "but his destruction would be small gain to us. We must strike deeper, to hew down the baneful stock of heresy. All our adversaries must perish with him, and in such manner as shall best attest the vengeance of Heaven. Placed beneath the Parliament-house, a mine of powder shall hurl its heretical occupants into the air,—nor shall any one survive the terrible explosion. Are we all agreed to this plan?"

All the conspirators expressed their assent, except Sir Everard Digby.

"Before I give my concurrence to the measure," observed the latter; "I would fain be resolved by Father Garnet whether it is lawful to destroy some few of our own faith with so many heretics."

"Unquestionably, my son," replied Garnet. "As in besieging a city we have a right to kill all within it, whether friends or enemies, so in this case we are justified in destroying the innocent with the guilty, because their destruction will be advantageous to the Catholic cause."

"I am satisfied," replied Digby.

"As to the tyrant and apostate James," continued Garnet, "he is excommunicated, and his subjects released from their allegiance. I have two breves sent over by his holiness Pope Clement VIII. three years ago, one directed to the clergy, and the other to the nobility of this realm, wherein, alluding to Queen Elizabeth, it is expressly declared that, 'so soon as that miserable woman should depart out of this life, none shall be permitted to ascend the throne, how near soever in proximity of blood, unless they are such as will not only tolerate the Catholic faith, but in every

way support it.' By this brief, James is expressly excluded. He has betrayed, not supported the church of Rome. Having broken his word with us, and oppressed our brethren more rigorously even than his predecessor, the remorseless Elizabeth, he is unworthy longer to reign, and must be removed."

"He must," reiterated the conspirators.

"The Parliament-house being the place where all the mischief done us has been contrived by our adversaries, it is fitting that it should be the place of their chastisement," remarked Catesby.

"Doubtless," rejoined Ambrose Rookwood.

"Yet if the blow we meditate should miscarry," observed Thomas Winter, "the injury to the Catholic religion will be so great, that not only our enemies, but our very friends will condemn us."

"There is no chance of miscarriage, if we are true to each other," returned Catesby confidently. "And if I suspected any one of treachery, I would plunge my sword into his bosom, were he my brother."

"You would do wrong to act thus on mere

suspicion," remarked Tresham, who stood near him.

"In a case like this, he who gave the slightest ground for doubt would merit death," replied Catesby, sternly; "and I would slay him."

"Hum!" exclaimed Tresham, uneasily.

"Mr. Catesby will now perhaps inform us what has been done to carry the project into effect?" inquired Sir Everard Digby.

"A small habitation has been taken by one of our confederates, Mr. Thomas Percy, immediately adjoining the Parliament-house," replied Catesby, "from the cellar of which it is proposed to dig a mine through the wall of the devoted building, and to deposit within it a sufficient quantity of gunpowder, and other combustibles to accomplish our purpose. This mine must be digged by ourselves, as we can employ no assistants, and will be a laborious and dangerous task. But I for one will cheerfully undertake it."

"And I," said the elder Wright.

"And I," cried several others.

"Supposing the mine digged, and the powder

deposited," observed Ambrose Rookwood, "whose hand will fire the train?"

"Mine!" cried Guy Fawkes, throwing open the door. As soon as he had spoken, he retired and closed it after him.

"He will keep his word," remarked Garnet. "He is of a nature so resolute that he would destroy himself with the victims rather than fail. Catiline was not a bolder conspirator than Guy Fawkes."

"Well, gentlemen," observed Catesby, "we are now at the latter end of July. All must be ready against the meeting of Parliament in November."

"There is some likelihood, I hear, that the meeting of the house will be prorogued till February," remarked Tresham.

"So much the better," rejoined Catesby, "it will give us more time for preparation."

"So much the worse, I think," cried Ambrose Rookwood. "Delays are ever dangerous, and doubly dangerous in a case like ours."

"I am far from desiring to throw any impediment in the way of our design," observed Sir

Everard Digby, "but I would recommend, before we proceed to this terrible extremity, that one last effort should be made to move the King in our behalf."

"It is useless," replied Catesby. "So far from toleration, he meditates severer measures against us; and, I am well assured, if Parliament is allowed to meet, such laws will be passed as will bring all of us within premunire. No, no. We have no hope from James, nor his ministers."

"Nor yet from France or Spain," observed Thomas Winter. "In my conference with the Constable Velasco at Bergen, I received assurances of the good-will of Philip towards us, but no distinct promise of interference in our behalf. The Archduke Albert is well disposed, but he can render no assistance. We must depend upon ourselves."

"Ay, marry, must we," replied Catesby, "and fortunate is it that we have devised a plan by which we can accomplish our purpose unaided. We only require funds to follow up with effect the blow we shall strike."

"My whole fortune shall be placed at your disposal," replied Sir Everard Digby.

"Part of mine has already been given," said Tresham, "and the rest shall follow."

"Would I had aught to peril in the matter except my life," said Catesby. "I would throw everything upon the stake."

"You do enough in venturing thus much, my son," rejoined Garnet. "To you the whole conduct of the enterprise is committed."

"I live for nothing else," replied Catesby, "and if I see it successful, I shall have lived long enough."

"Cannot Sir William Radcliffe be induced to join us?" asked Rookwood. "He would be an important acquisition, and his wealth would prove highly serviceable."

"I have sounded him," answered Catesby. "But he appears reluctant."

"Be not satisfied with one attempt," urged Christopher Wright. "The jeopardy in which he now stands may make him change his mind."

"I am loth to interrupt the discussion," returned Garnet, "but I think we have tarried

here long enough. We will meet again at midnight, when I hope to introduce Sir William Radcliffe to you as a confederate."

The party then separated, and Garnet went in search of the knight.

Ascertaining that he was in his own chamber, he proceeded thither, and found him alone. Entering at once upon the subject in hand, Garnet pleaded his cause with so much zeal that he at last wrung a reluctant consent from the listener. Scarcely able to conceal his exultation, he then proposed to Sir William to adjourn with him to the private chapel in the house, where, having taken the oath, and received the sacrament upon it, he should forthwith be introduced to the conspirators, and the whole particulars of the plot revealed to him. To this the knight, with some hesitation, agreed. As they traversed a gallery leading to the chapel, they met Viviana. For the first time in his life Radcliffe's gaze sank before his daughter, and he would have passed her without speaking had she not stopped him.

"Father! dear father!" she cried, "I know whither you are going—and for what purpose. Do not—do not join them."

Sir William Radcliffe made no reply, but endeavoured gently to push her aside.

She would not, however, be repulsed, but prostrating herself before him, clasped his knees, and besought him not to proceed.

Making a significant gesture to Sir William, Garnet walked forward.

"Viviana," cried the knight, sternly, "my resolution is taken. I command you to retire to your chamber."

So saying, he broke from her, and followed Garnet. Clasping her hands to her brow, Viviana gazed for a moment with a frenzied look after him, and then rushed from the gallery.

On reaching the chapel, Sir William, who had been much shaken by this meeting, was some minutes in recovering his composure. Garnet employed the time in renewing his arguments, and with so much address that he succeeded in quieting the scruples of conscience

which had been awakened in the knight's breast by his daughter's warning.

"And now, my son," he said, "since you have determined to enrol your name in the list of those sworn to deliver their church from oppression, take this primer in your hand, and kneel down before the altar, while I administer the oath which is to unite you to us."

Garnet then advanced towards the altar, and Sir William was about to prostrate himself upon a cushion beside it, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and Guy Fawkes strode into the chapel.

"Hold!" he exclaimed, grasping Radcliffe's right arm, and fixing his dark glance upon him; "you shall not take that oath."

"What mean you?" cried Garnet, who, as well as the knight, was paralysed with astonishment at this intrusion. "Sir William Radcliffe is about to join us."

"I know it," replied Fawkes; "but it may not be. He has no heart in the business, and will lend it no efficient assistance. We are better without him, than with him."



Guy Fawkes preventing Sir William Ratcliffe from joining the Conspiracy.



As he spoke, he took the primer from the knight's hand, and laid it upon the altar.

"This conduct is inexplicable," cried Garnet, angrily. "You will answer for it to others, as well as to me."

"I will answer for it to all," replied Guy Fawkes. "Let Sir William Radcliffe declare before me, and before Heaven, that he approves the measure, and I am content he should take the oath."

"I cannot belie my conscience by saying so," replied the knight, who appeared agitated by conflicting emotions.

"Yet you have promised to join us," cried Garnet, reproachfully.

"Better break that promise than a solemn oath," rejoined Guy Fawkes, sternly. "Sir William Radcliffe, there are reasons why you should not join this conspiracy. Examine your inmost heart, and it will tell you what they are."

"I understand you," replied the knight.

"Get hence," cried Garnet, unable to control his indignation, "or I will pronounce

our Church's most terrible malediction against you."

"I shall not shrink from it, father," rejoined Fawkes, humbly, but firmly, "seeing I am acting rightly."

"Undeceive yourself, then, at once," returned Garnet, "and learn that you are thwarting our great and holy purpose."

"On the contrary," replied Fawkes, "I am promoting it, by preventing one from joining it who will endanger its success."

"You are a traitor!" cried Garnet, furiously.

"A traitor!" exclaimed Guy Fawkes, his eye blazing with fierce lustre, though his voice and demeanour were unaltered,—"I, who have been warned thrice,—twice by the dead,—and lastly by a vision from heaven, yet still remain firm to my purpose,—I, who have voluntarily embraced the most dangerous and difficult part of the enterprise,—I, who would suffer the utmost extremity of torture, rather than utter a word that should reveal it,—a traitor! No, father, I am none. If you think so, take this sword and at once put an end to your doubts."

There was something so irresistible in the manner of Guy Fawkes, that Garnet remained silent.

"Do with me what you please," continued Fawkes: "but do not compel Sir William Radcliffe to join the conspiracy. He will be fatal to it."

"No one shall compel me to join it," replied the knight.

"Perhaps it is better thus," returned Garnet, after a pause, during which he was buried in reflection. "I will urge you no further, my son. But before you depart you must swear not to divulge what you have just learnt."

"Willingly," replied the knight.

"There is another person who must also take that oath," said Guy Fawkes, "having accidentally become acquainted with as much as yourself."

And stepping out of the chapel, he immediately afterwards returned with Viviana

"You will now understand why I would not allow Sir William to join the conspiracy," he observed to Garnet.

"I do," replied the latter, gloomily.

The oath administered, the knight and his daughter quitted the chapel, accompanied by Guy Fawkes. Viviana was profuse in her expressions of gratitude, nor was her father less earnest in his acknowledgments.

A few hours after this, Sir William Radcliffe informed Sir Everard Digby that it was his intention to depart immediately, and, though the latter attempted to dissuade him by representing the danger to which he would be exposed, he continued inflexible. The announcement surprised both Catesby and Garnet, who were present when it was made, and added their entreaties to those of Digby — but without effect. Catesby's proposal to serve as an escort was likewise refused by Sir William, who said he had no fears, and when questioned as to his destination, he returned an evasive answer. This sudden resolution of the knight, coupled with his refusal to join the plot, alarmed the conspirators, and more than one expressed fears of treachery. Sir Everard Digby, however, was not of the number, but asserted that Radcliffe was a

man of the highest honour, and he would answer for his secrecy with his life.

"Will you answer for that of his daughter?" demanded Tresham.

"*I* will," replied Fawkes.

"To put the matter beyond a doubt," observed Catesby, "I will set out shortly after him, and follow him unobserved till he halts for the night, and ascertain whether he stops at any suspicious quarter."

"Do so, my son," replied Garnet.

"It is needless," observed Sir Everard Digby; "but do as you please."

By this time, Radcliffe's horses being brought round by Heydocke, he and his daughter took a hasty leave of their friends. When they had been gone a few minutes, Catesby called for his steed; and, after exchanging a word or two with Garnet, rode after them. He had proceeded about a couple of miles along a cross-road leading to Nantwich, which he learnt from some cottagers was the route taken by the party before him, when he heard the tramp of a horse in the rear, and, turning at the sound, beheld

Guy Fawkes. Drawing in the bridle, he halted till the latter came up, and angrily demanded on what errand he was bent.

"My errand is the same as your own," replied Fawkes. "I intend to follow Sir William Radcliffe, and, if need be, defend him."

Whatever Catesby's objections might be to this companionship, he did not think fit to declare them, and, though evidently much displeased, suffered Guy Fawkes to ride by his side without opposition.

Having gained the summit of the mountainous range extending from Malpas to Tottenhall, whence they beheld the party whose course they were tracking enter a narrow lane at the foot of the hill, Catesby, fearful of losing sight of them, set spurs to his steed. Guy Fawkes kept close beside him, and they did not slacken their pace until they reached the lane.

Having proceeded along it for a quarter of a mile, they were alarmed by the sudden report of fire-arms, followed by a loud shriek, which neither of them doubted was uttered by Viviana. Again dashing forward, on turning a corner of

the road, they beheld the party surrounded by half-a-dozen troopers. Sir William Radcliffe had shot one of his assailants, and, assisted by Heydocke, was defending himself bravely against the others. With loud shouts, Catesby and Guy Fawkes galloped towards the scene of strife. But they were too late. A bullet pierced the knight's brain; and he no sooner fell, than, regardless of himself, the old steward flung away his sword, and threw himself, with the most piteous lamentations, on the body.

Viviana, meanwhile, had been compelled to dismount, and was in the hands of the troopers. On seeing her father's fate, her shrieks were so heart-piercing, that even her captors were moved to compassion. Fighting his way towards her, Catesby cut down one of the troopers, and snatching her from the grasp of the other, who was terrified by the furious assault, placed her on the saddle beside him, and striking spurs into his charger at the same moment, leapt the hedge, and made good his retreat.

This daring action, however, could not have been accomplished without the assistance of Guy

Fawkes, who warded off with his rapier all the blows aimed at him and his lovely charge. While thus engaged, he received a severe cut on the head, which stretched him senseless and bleeding beneath his horse's feet.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PACKET.

On recovering from the effects of the wound he had received from the trooper, Guy Fawkes found himself stretched upon a small bed in a cottage, with Viviana and Catesby watching beside him. A thick fold of linen was bandaged round his head, and he was so faint from the great effusion of blood he had sustained, that, after gazing vacantly around him for a few minutes, and but imperfectly comprehending what he beheld, his eyes closed, and he relapsed into insensibility. Restoratives being applied, he revived in a short time, and, in answer to his inquiries as to how he came thither, was informed by Catesby that he had been left for dead by his assailants, who, contenting themselves with making the old steward prisoner, had ridden off in the direction of Chester.

"What has become of Sir William Radcliffe?" asked the wounded man in a feeble voice.

Catesby raised his finger to his lips, and Fawkes learnt the distressing nature of the question he had asked by the agonizing cry that burst from Viviana. Unable to control her grief, she withdrew, and Catesby then told him that the body of Sir William Radcliffe was lying in an adjoining cottage, whither it had been transported from the scene of the conflict; adding that it was Viviana's earnest desire that it should be conveyed to Manchester to the family vault in the Collegiate Church; but that he feared her wish could not be safely complied with. A messenger, however, had been despatched to Holt; and Sir Everard Digby, and Fathers Garnet and Oldcorne, were momentarily expected, when some course would be decided upon for the disposal of the unfortunate knight's remains.

"Poor Viviana!" groaned Fawkes. "She has now no protector."

"Rest easy on that score," rejoined Catesby. "She shall never want one while I live."

The wounded man fixed his eyes, now blazing with red and unnatural light, inquiringly upon him, but he said nothing.

"I know what you mean," continued Catesby; "you think I shall wed her, and you are in the right. I shall. The marriage is essential to our enterprise; and the only obstacle to it is removed."

Fawkes attempted to reply, but his parched tongue refused its office. Catesby arose, and carefully raising his head, held a cup of water to his lips. The sufferer eagerly drained it, and would have asked for more; but seeing that the request would be refused, he left it unuttered.

"Have you examined my wound?" he said, after a pause.

Catesby answered in the affirmative.

"And do you judge it mortal?" continued Fawkes. "Not that I have any fear of Death. I have looked him in the face too often for that. But I have somewhat on my mind which I would fain discharge before my earthly pilgrimage is ended."

"Do not delay it, then," rejoined the other. "Knowing I speak to a soldier, and a brave one, I do not hesitate to tell you your hours are numbered."

"Heaven's will be done!" exclaimed Fawkes, in a tone of resignation. "I thought myself destined to be one of the chief instruments of the restoration of our holy religion. But I find I was mistaken. When Father Garnet arrives, I beseech you let me see him instantly. Or, if he should not come speedily, entreat Miss Radcliffe to grant me a few moments in private."

"Why not unburthen yourself to me?" returned Catesby, distrustfully. "In your circumstances I should desire no better confessor than a brother soldier,—no other crucifix than a sword-hilt."

"Nor I," rejoined Fawkes. "But this is no confession I am about to make. What I have to say relates to others, not to myself."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Catesby. "Then there is the more reason why it should not be deferred. I hold it my duty to tell you that the fever of your wound will, in all probability, produce de-

lirium. Make your communication while your senses remain to you. And whatever you enjoin shall be rigorously fulfilled."

"Will you swear this?" cried Fawkes, eagerly. But before an answer could be returned, he added, in an altered tone, "No,—no,—it cannot be."

"This is no time for anger," rejoined Catesby, sternly, "or I should ask whether you doubt the assurance I have given you?"

"I doubt nothing but your compliance with my request," returned Fawkes. "And oh! if you hope to be succoured at your hour of need, tell Miss Radcliffe I desire to speak with her."

"The message will not need to be conveyed," said Viviana, who had noiselessly entered the room; "she is here."

Guy Fawkes turned his gaze in the direction of the voice; and, notwithstanding his own deplorable condition, he was filled with concern at the change wrought in her appearance by the terrible shock she had undergone. Her countenance was as pale as death,—her eyes, from which no tears would flow, as is ever the case with the deepest distress, were glassy and lustre-

less,—her luxuriant hair hung in dishevelled masses over her shoulders,—and her attire was soiled and disordered.

"You desire to speak with me?" she continued, advancing towards the couch of the wounded man.

"It must be alone," he replied.

Viviana glanced at Catesby, who reluctantly arose, and closed the door after him. "We *are* alone now," she said.

"Water! water!" gasped the sufferer, "or I perish." His request being complied with, he continued in a low solemn voice, "Viviana, you have lost the dearest friend you had on earth, and you will soon lose one who, if he had been spared, would have endeavoured, as far as he could, to repair the loss. I say not this to aggravate your distress, but to prove the sincerity of my regard. Let me conjure you, with my dying breath, not to wed Mr. Catesby."

"Fear it not," replied Viviana. "I would rather endure death than consent to do so."

"Be upon your guard against him, then," continued Fawkes. "When an object is to

be gained, he suffers few scruples to stand in his way."

"I am well aware of it," replied Viviana; "and on the arrival of Sir Everard Digby, I shall place myself under his protection."

"Should you be driven to extremity," said Fawkes, taking a small packet from the folds of his doublet, "break open this; it will inform you what to do. Only promise me you will not have recourse to it till all other means have failed."

Viviana took the packet, and gave the required promise.

"Conceal it about your person, and guard it carefully," continued Fawkes; "for you know not when you may require it. And now, having cleared my conscience, I can die easily. Let me have your prayers."

Viviana knelt down by the bedside, and poured forth the most earnest supplications in his behalf.

"Perhaps," she said, as she arose, "and it is some consolation to think so,—you may be saved by death from the commission of a great

crime, which would for ever have excluded you from the joys of heaven."

"Say rather," cried Guy Fawkes, whose brain began to wander, "which would have secured them to me. Others will achieve it; but I shall have no share in their glory, or their reward."

"Their reward will be perdition in this world and the next," rejoined Viviana. "I repeat, that though I deeply deplore your condition, I rejoice in your delivery from this sin. It is better—far better—to die thus, than by the hands of the common executioner."

"What do I see?" cried Guy Fawkes, trying to raise himself, and sinking back again instantly upon the pillow. "Elizabeth Orton rises before me. She beckons me after her—I come!—I come!"

"Heaven pity him!" cried Viviana. "His senses have left him!"

"She leads me into a gloomy cavern," continued Fawkes more wildly; "but my eyes are like the wolf's, and can penetrate the darkness. It is filled with barrels of gunpowder. I see them ranged in tiers, one above another. Ah!

I know where I am now. It is the vault beneath the Parliament-house. The King and his nobles are assembled in the hall above. Lend me a torch, that I may fire the train, and blow them into the air. Quick! quick! I have sworn their destruction, and will keep my oath. What matter if I perish with them? Give me the torch, I say, or it will be too late. Is the powder damp that it will not kindle? And see! the torch is expiring—it is gone out! Distraction!—to be baffled thus! Why do you stand and glare at me with your stony eyes? Who are those with you? Fiends!—no! they are armed men. They seize me—they drag me before a grave assemblage. What is that hideous engine? The rack!—Bind me on it—break every limb—ye shall not force me to confess—ha! ha! I laugh at your threats—ha! ha!"

"Mother of mercy! release him from this torture!" cried Viviana.

"So! ye have condemned me," continued Fawkes, "and will drag me to execution. Well, well, I am prepared. But what a host is as-

sembled to see me! Ten thousand faces are turned towards me, and all with one abhorrent bloodthirsty expression. And what a scaffold! Get it done quickly, thou butcherly villain. The rope is twisted round my throat in serpent folds. It strangles me—ah!"

"Horror!" exclaimed Viviana. "I can listen to this no longer. Help, Mr. Catesby, help!"

"The knife is at my breast—it pierces my flesh—my heart is torn forth—I die! I die!" And he utterred a dreadful groan.

"What has happened?" cried Catesby, rushing into the room. "Is he dead?"

"I fear so," replied Viviana; "and his end has been a fearful one."

"No—no," said Catesby; "his pulse still beats—but fiercely and feverishly. You had better not remain here longer, Miss Radcliffe. I will watch over him. All will soon be over."

Aware that she could be of no further use, Viviana cast a look of the deepest commiseration at the sufferer, and retired. The occupant of the cottage, an elderly female, had surrendered

all the apartments of her tenement, except one small room, to her guests, and she was therefore undisturbed. The terrible event which had recently occurred, and the harrowing scene she had just witnessed, were too much for Viviana, and her anguish was so intense, that she began to fear her reason was deserting her. She stood still,—gazed fearfully round, as if some secret danger environed her,—clasped her hands to her temples, and found them burning like hot iron,—and, then, alarmed at her own state, knelt down, prayed, and wept. Yes! she wept, for the first time, since her father's destruction, and the relief afforded by those scalding tears was inexpressible.

From this piteous state she was aroused by the tramp of horses at the door of the cottage, and the next moment Father Garnet presented himself.

"How uncertain are human affairs!" he said, after a sorrowful greeting had passed between them. "I little thought, when we parted yesterday, we should meet again so soon, and under such afflicting circumstances."

"It is the will of Heaven, father," replied Viviana, "and we must not murmur at its decrees, but bear our chastening as we best may."

"I am happy to find you in such a comfortable frame of mind, dear daughter. I feared the effect of the shock upon your feelings. But I am glad to find you bear up against it so well."

"I am surprised at my own firmness, father," replied Viviana. "But I have been schooled in affliction. I have no tie left to bind me to the world, and shall retire from it, not only without regret, but with eagerness."

"Say not so, dear daughter," replied Garnet. "You have, I trust, much happiness in store for you. And when the sharpness of your affliction is worn off, you will view your condition in a more cheering light."

"Impossible!" she cried, mournfully. "Hope is wholly extinct in my breast. But I will not contest the point. Is not Sir Everard Digby with you?"

"He is not, daughter," replied Garnet, "and I will explain to you wherefore. Soon after your departure yesterday, the mansion we occupied at

Holt was attacked by a band of soldiers, headed by Miles Topcliffe, one of the most unrelenting of our persecutors; and though they were driven off with some loss, yet, as there was every reason to apprehend they would return with fresh force, Sir Everard judged it prudent to retreat; and accordingly he and his friends, with all their attendants, except those he has sent with me, have departed for Buckinghamshire."

"Where, then, is Father Oldcorne?" inquired Viviana.

"Alas! daughter," rejoined Garnet, "I grieve to say he is a prisoner. Imprudently exposing himself during the attack, he was seized and carried off by Topcliffe and his myrmidons."

"How true is the saying, that misfortunes never come single!" sighed Viviana. "I seem bereft of all I hold dear."

"Sir Everard has sent four of his trustiest servants with me," remarked Garnet. "They are well armed, and will attend you wherever you choose to lead them. He has also furnished me with a sum of money for your use."

"He is most kind and considerate," replied

Viviana. "And now, father," she faltered, "there is one subject which it is necessary to speak upon; and, though I shrink from it, it must not be postponed."

"I guess what you mean, daughter," said Garnet, sympathizingly; "you allude to the interment of Sir William Radcliffe. Is the body here?"

"It is in an adjoining cottage," replied Viviana, in a broken voice. "I have already expressed my wish to Mr. Catesby to have it conveyed to Manchester, to our family vault."

"I see not how that can be accomplished, dear daughter," replied Garnet; "but I will confer with Mr. Catesby on the subject. Where is he?"

"In the next room by the couch of Guy Fawkes, who is dying," said Viviana.

"Dying!" echoed Garnet, starting. "I heard he was dangerously hurt, but did not suppose the wound would prove fatal. Here is another grievous blow to the good cause."

At this moment the door was opened by Catesby.

"How is the sufferer?" asked Garnet.

"A slight change for the better appears to have taken place," answered Catesby. "His fever has in some degree abated, and he has sunk into a gentle slumber."

"Can he be removed with safety?" inquired Garnet; "for, I fear, if he remains here he will fall into the hands of Topcliffe and his crew, who are scouring the country in every direction." And he recapitulated all he had just stated to Viviana.

Catesby was for some time lost in reflection.

"I am fairly perplexed as to what course it will be best to pursue," he said. "Dangers and difficulties beset us on every side. I am inclined to yield to Viviana's request, and proceed to Manchester."

"That will be rushing into the very face of danger," observed Garnet.

"And, therefore, may be the safest plan," replied Catesby. "Our adversaries will scarcely suspect us of so desperate a step."

"Perhaps you are in the right, my son,"

returned Garnet, after a moment's reflection. "At all events, I bow to your judgment."

"The plan is too much in accordance with my own wishes to meet with any opposition on my part," observed Viviana.

"Will you accompany us, father?" asked Catesby; "or do you proceed to Gothurst?"

"I will go with you, my son. Viviana will need a protector. And, till I have seen her in some place of safety, I will not leave her."

"Since we have come to this determination," rejoined Catesby, "as soon as the needful preparations can be made, and Guy Fawkes has had some hours' repose, we will set out. Under cover of night we can travel with security; and, by using some exertion, may reach Ordsall Hall, whither, I presume, Viviana would choose to proceed, in the first instance, before daybreak."

"I am well mounted, and so are my attendants," replied Garnet; "and, by the provident care of Sir Everard Digby, each of them has a led horse with him."

"That is well," said Catesby. "And now, Viviana, may I entreat you to take my place

for a short time by the couch of the sufferer. In a few hours everything shall be in readiness."

He then retired with Garnet, while Viviana proceeded to the adjoining chamber, where she found Guy Fawkes still slumbering tranquilly.

As the evening advanced, he awoke, and appeared much refreshed. While he was speaking, Garnet and Catesby approached his bedside, and he seemed overjoyed at the sight of the former. The subject of the journey being mentioned to him, he at once expressed his ready compliance with the arrangement, and only desired that the last rites of his church might be performed for him before he set out.

Garnet informed him that he came for that very purpose; and as soon as they were left alone, he proceeded to the discharge of his priestly duties, confessed and absolved him, giving him the viaticum and the extreme unction. And, lastly, he judged it expedient to administer a powerful opiate, to lull the pain of his wound on the journey.

This done, he summoned Catesby, who, with two of the attendants, raised the couch on which

the wounded man was stretched, and conveyed him to the litter. So well was this managed, that Fawkes sustained no injury, and little inconvenience, from the movement. Two strong country vehicles had been procured; the one containing the wounded man's litter, the other the shell, which had been hastily put together, to hold the remains of the unfortunate Sir William Radcliffe. Viviana being placed in the saddle, and Catesby having liberally rewarded the cottagers who had afforded them shelter, the little cavalcade was put in motion. In this way they journeyed through the night; and shaping their course through Tarporley, Northwich, and Altringham, arrived at daybreak in the neighbourhood of Ordsall Hall.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ELIXIR.

On beholding the well-remembered roof and gables of the old mansion peeping from out the grove of trees in which it was embosomed, Viviana's heart died away within her. The thought that her father, who had so recently quitted it in the full enjoyment of health, and of every worldly blessing, should be so soon brought back a corpse, was almost too agonizing for endurance. Reflecting, however, that this was no season for the indulgence of grief, but that she was called upon to act with firmness, she bore up resolutely against her emotion.

Arrived within a short distance of the Hall, Catesby caused the little train to halt under the shelter of the trees, while he rode forward to

ascertain that they could safely approach it. As he drew near, everything proclaimed that the hand of the spoiler had been there. Crossing the drawbridge, he entered the court, which bore abundant marks of the devastation recently committed. Various articles of furniture, broken, burnt, or otherwise destroyed, were lying scattered about. The glass in the windows was shivered; the doors forced from their hinges; the stone-copings of the walls pushed off; the flower-beds trampled upon; the moat itself was in some places choked up with rubbish, while in others its surface was covered with floating pieces of timber.

Led by curiosity, Catesby proceeded to the spot where the stables had stood. Nothing but a heap of blackened ruins met his gaze. Scarcely one stone was standing on another. The appearance of the place was so desolate and disheartening, that he turned away instantly. Leaving his horse in a shed, he entered the house. Here, again, he encountered fresh ravages. The oak-panels and skirting-boards were torn from the walls; the ceilings pulled down; and the floor

lay inch-deep in broken plaster and dust. On ascending to the upper rooms, he found the same disorder. The banisters of the stairs were broken; the bedsteads destroyed; the roof partially untiled. Every room was thickly strewn with leaves torn from valuable books, with fragments of apparel, and other articles, which the searchers not being able to carry off had wantonly destroyed.

Having contemplated this scene of havoc for some time, with feelings of the bitterest indignation, Catesby descended to the lowest story; and, after searching ineffectually for the domestics, was about to depart, when, turning suddenly, he perceived a man watching him from an adjoining room. Catesby instantly called to him; but, seeing that the fellow disregarded his assurances, and was about to take to his heels, he drew his sword, and threatened him with severe punishment if he attempted to fly. Thus exhorted, the man—who was no other than the younger Heydocke—advanced towards him; and throwing himself at his feet, begged him in the most piteous terms to do him no injury.

"I have already told you I am a friend," replied Catesby, sheathing his sword.

"Ah! Mr. Catesby, is it you I behold?" cried Martin Heydocke, whose fears had hitherto prevented him from noticing the features of the intruder. "What brings your worship to this ill-fated house?"

"First let me know if there is any enemy about?" replied Catesby.

"None that I am aware of," rejoined Martin. "Having ransacked the premises, and done all the mischief they could, as you perceive, the miscreants departed the day before yesterday, and I have seen nothing of them since, though I have been constantly on the watch. The only alarm I have had was that occasioned by your worship just now."

"Are you alone here?" demanded Catesby.

"No, your worship," answered Martin. "There are several of the servants concealed in a secret passage under the house. But they are so terrified by what has lately happened, that they never dare show themselves, except during the night-time."

"I do not wonder at it," replied Catesby.

"And now may I inquire whether your worship brings any tidings of Sir William Radcliffe and Mistress Viviana?" rejoined Martin. "I hope no ill has befallen them. My father, old Jerome Heydocke, set out to Holywell a few days ago, to apprise them of their danger, and I have not heard of them since."

"Sir William Radcliffe is dead," replied Catesby. "The villains have murdered him. Your father is a prisoner."

"Alas! alas!" cried the young man, bursting into tears; "these are fearful times to live in. What will become of us all?"

"We must rise against the oppressor," replied Catesby sternly. "Bite the heel that tramples upon us."

"We must," rejoined Martin. "And if my poor arm could avail, it should not be slow to strike."

"Manfully resolved!" cried Catesby, who never lost an opportunity of gaining a proselyte. "I will point out to you a way by which you may accomplish what you desire. But we will talk of this hereafter. Hoard up your vengeance till the fitting moment for action arrives."

He then proceeded to explain to the young man, who was greatly surprised by the intelligence, that Viviana was at hand, and that the body of Sir William had been brought thither for interment in the family vault at the Collegiate Church. Having ascertained that there was a chamber, which, having suffered less than the others, might serve for Viviana's accommodation, Catesby returned to the party.

A more melancholy cavalcade has been seldom seen than now approached the gates of Ordsall Hall. First rode Viviana, in an agony of tears, for her grief had by this time become absolutely uncontrolable, with Catesby on foot, leading her horse. Next came Garnet, greatly exhausted and depressed; his eyes cast dejectedly on the ground. Then came the litter, containing Guy Fawkes; and, lastly, the vehicle with the body of Sir William Radcliffe. On arriving at the gate, Viviana was met by two female servants, whom Martin Heydocke had summoned from their hiding-places; and, as soon as she had dismounted, she was supported, for she was scarcely able to walk unaided, to the chamber destined for

her reception. This done, Catesby proceeded, with some anxiety, to superintend the removal of Fawkes, who was perfectly insensible. His wound had bled considerably during the journey; but the effusion had stopped, when the faintness supervened. He was placed in one of the lower rooms till a sleeping-chamber could be prepared for him. The last task was to attend to the remains of the late unfortunate possessor of the mansion. By Catesby's directions a large oak table, once occupying the great hall, was removed to the Star Chamber, already described as the principal room of the house; and, being securely propped up,—for, like the rest of the furniture, it had been much damaged by the spoilers, though, being of substantial material, it offered greater resistance to their efforts,—the shell containing the body was placed upon it.

"Better he should lie thus," exclaimed Catesby, when the melancholy office was completed, "than live to witness the wreck around him. Fatal as are these occurrences," he added, pursuing the train of thought suggested by the scene, "they are yet favourable to my purpose. The

only person who could have prevented my union with Viviana Radcliffe—her father—lies there. Who would have thought when she rejected my proposal a few days ago, in this very room, how fortune would conspire—and by what dark and inscrutable means—to bring it about! Fallen as it is, this house is not yet fallen so low, but I can reinstate it. Its young mistress mine, her estates mine,—for she is now inheritress of all her father's possessions,—the utmost reach of my ambition were gained, and all but *one* object of my life—for which I have dared so much, and struggled so long—achieved!"

"What are you thinking of, my son?" asked Garnet, who had watched the changing expression of his sombre countenance,—"what are you thinking of?" he said, tapping him on the shoulder.

"Of that which is never absent from my thoughts, father—the great design," replied Catesby; "and of the means of its accomplishment, which this sad scene suggests."

"I do not understand you, my son," rejoined the other.

"Does not Radcliffe's blood cry aloud for vengeance?" continued Catesby; "and, think you his child will be deaf to the cry? No, father, she will no longer tamely submit to wrongs that would steel the gentlest bosom, and make firm the feeblest arm, but will go hand and heart with us in our project. Viviana must be mine," he added, altering his tone, "*ours*, I should say,—for, if she is mine, all the vast possessions that have accrued to her by her father's death shall be devoted to the furtherance of the mighty enterprise."

"I cannot think she will refuse you now, my son," replied Garnet.

"She *shall not* refuse me, father," rejoined Catesby. "The time is gone by for idle wooing."

"I will be no party to forcible measures, my son," returned Garnet, gravely. "As far as persuasion goes, I will lend you every assistance in my power, but nothing further."

"Persuasion is all that will be required, I am assured, father," answered Catesby, hastily, perceiving he had committed himself too far. "But let us now see what can be done for Guy Fawkes."

"Would there was any hope of his life!" exclaimed Garnet, sighing deeply. "In losing him, we lose the bravest of our band."

"We do," returned Catesby. "And yet he has been subject to strange fancies of late."

"He has been appalled, but never shaken," rejoined Garnet. "Of all our number, you and he were the only two upon whom I could rely. When he is gone, you will stand alone."

Catesby made no reply, but led the way to the chamber where the wounded man lay. He had regained his consciousness, but was too feeble to speak. After such restoratives as were at hand had been administered, Catesby was about to order a room to be fitted up for him, when Viviana, whose anxiety for the sufferer had overcome her affliction, made her appearance. On learning Catesby's intentions, she insisted upon Fawkes being removed to the room allotted to her, which had not been dismantled like the rest. Seeing it was in vain to oppose her, Catesby assented, and the sufferer was accordingly carried thither, and placed within the bed — a large antique piece of furniture, hung with faded damask

curtains. The room was one of the oldest in the house, and at the further end stood a small closet, approached by an arched doorway, and fitted up with a hassock and crucifix, which, strange to say, had escaped the ravages of the searchers.

Placed within the couch, Guy Fawkes began to ramble as before about the conspiracy; and fearing his ravings might awaken the suspicion of the servants, Catesby would not suffer any of them to come near him, but arranged with Garnet to keep watch over him by turns. By degrees, he became more composed; and, after dozing a little, opened his eyes, and, looking round, inquired anxiously for his sword. At first, Catesby, who was alone with him at the time, hesitated in his answer, but seeing he appeared greatly disturbed, he showed him that his hat, gauntlets, and rapier were lying by the bedside.

"I am content," replied the wounded man, smiling faintly; "that sword has never left my side, waking or sleeping, for twenty years. Let me grasp it once more — perhaps for the last time."

Catesby handed him the weapon. He looked at it for a few moments, and pressed the blade to his lips.

"Farewell, old friend!" he said, a tear gathering in his eye, "farewell! Catesby," he added, as he resigned the weapon to him, "I have one request to make. Let my sword be buried with me."

"It shall," replied Catesby, in a voice suffocated by emotion, for the request touched him where his stern nature was most accessible: "I will place it by you myself."

"Thanks!" exclaimed Fawkes. And soon after this, he again fell into a slumber.

His sleep endured for some hours; but his breathing grew fainter and fainter, so that at the last it was scarcely perceptible. A striking change had likewise taken place in his countenance, and these signs convinced Catesby he had not long to live. While he was watching him with great anxiety, Viviana appeared at the door of the chamber, and beckoned him out. Noiselessly obeying the summons, and following her along the gallery, he entered a room where he found Garnet.

"I have called you to say that a remedy has been suggested to me by Martin Heydocke," observed Viviana, "by which I trust Guy Fawkes may yet be saved."

"How?" asked Catesby, eagerly.

"Doctor Dee, the warden of Manchester, of whom you must have heard," she continued, "is said to possess an elixir of such virtue, that a few drops of it will snatch him who drinks them from the very jaws of death."

"I should not have suspected you of so much credulity, Viviana," replied Catesby: "but grant that Doctor Dee possesses this marvellous elixir—which for my own part I doubt—how are we to obtain it?"

"If you will repair to the college, and see him, I doubt not he will give it you," rejoined Viviana.

Catesby smiled incredulously.

"I have a claim upon Doctor Dee," she persisted, "which I have never enforced. I will now use it. Show him this token," she continued, detaching a small ornament from her neck; "tell him you bring it from me, and I am sure he will comply with your request."

"Your commands shall be obeyed, Viviana," replied Catesby; "but I frankly confess I have no faith in the remedy."

"It is at least worth the trial, my son," observed Garnet. "Doctor Dee is a wonderful person, and has made many discoveries in medicine, as in other sciences, and this marvellous specific may, for aught we know, turn out no imposture."

"If such is your opinion," replied Catesby, "I will set out at once. If it is to be tried at all, it must be without delay. The poor sufferer is sinking fast."

"Go then," cried Viviana, "and heaven speed your mission! If you could prevail upon Doctor Dee to visit the wounded man in person, I should prefer it. Besides, I have another request to make of him—but that will do hereafter. Lose not a moment now."

"I will fly on the wings of the wind," replied Catesby. "Heaven grant that when I return the object of our solicitude may not be past all human aid!"

With this, he hurried to an out-building in

which the horses were placed, and choosing the strongest and fleetest from out their number, mounted, and started at full gallop in the direction of Manchester; nor did he relax his speed until he reached the gates of the ancient College. Hanging the bridle of his smoking steed to a hook in the wall, he crossed the large quadrangular court; and finding the principal entrance open, passed the lofty room now used as the refectory, ascended the flight of stone stairs that conducts the modern visiter to the library, and was traversing the long galleries communicating with it, and now crowded with the learning of ages, bequeathed by the benevolence of his rival, Humphrey Chetham, when he encountered a grave but crafty-looking personage, in a loose brown robe and Polish cap, who angrily demanded his business.

Apologizing for the intrusion, Catesby was about to explain, when a small oak door near them was partly opened, and an authoritative voice, from within, exclaimed, "Do not hinder him, Kelley. I know his business, and will see him."

The seer made no further remark, but pointing to the door, Catesby at once comprehended that it was Dee's voice he had heard; and, though somewhat startled by the intimation that he was expected, entered the room. He found the Doctor surrounded by his magical apparatus, and slowly returning to the chair he had just quitted.

Without looking behind him to see whom he addressed, Dee continued, "I have just consulted my show-stone, and know why you are come hither. You bring a token from Viviana Radcliffe."

"I do," replied Catesby, in increased astonishment. "It is here."

"It is needless to produce it," replied Dee, still keeping his back towards him. "I have seen it already. Kelley," he continued, "I am about to set out for Ordsall Hall immediately. You must accompany me."

"Amazement!" cried Catesby. "Is the purpose of my visit then really known to your reverence?"

"You shall hear," rejoined Dee, facing him.

"You have a friend who is at the point of death, and having heard that I possess an elixir of wonderful efficacy, are come in quest of it."

"True," replied Catesby, utterly confounded.

"The name of that friend," pursued Dee, regarding him fixedly, "is Guy Fawkes, — your own, Robert Catesby."

"I need no more to convince me, reverend sir," rejoined Catesby, trembling, in spite of himself, "that all I have heard of your wonderful powers falls far short of the truth."

"You are but just in time," replied Dee, bowing gravely, in acknowledgment of the compliment. "Another hour, and it would have been too late."

"Then you think he will live!" cried Catesby, eagerly.

"I am sure of it," replied Dee, "provided—"

"Provided what?" interrupted Catesby. "Is there aught I can do to ensure his recovery?"

"No," replied Dee, sternly. "I am debating within myself whether it is worth while reviving him for a more dreadful fate."

"What mean you, reverend sir?" asked

Catesby, a shade passing over his countenance.

"You understand my meaning, and therefore need no explanation," replied Dee. "Return to Ordsall Hall, and tell Miss Radcliffe I will be there in an hour. Bid her have no further fear. If the wounded man breathes when I arrive, I will undertake to cure him. Add further, that I know the other request she desires to make of me, and that it is granted before it is asked. Farewell, sir, for a short time."

On reaching the court, Catesby expanded his chest, shook his limbs, and exclaimed, "At length, I breathe freely. The atmosphere of that infernal chamber smelt so horribly of sulphur that it almost stifled me. Well, if Doctor Dee has not dealings with the devil, man never had! However, if he cures Guy Fawkes, I care not whence the medicine comes from."

As he descended Smithy Bank, and was about to cross the old bridge over the Irwell, he perceived a man riding before him, who seemed anxious to avoid him. Struck by this person's manner, he urged his horse into a quicker pace,

and being the better mounted of the two, soon overtook him, when to his surprise he found it was Martin Heydocke.

"What are you doing here, sirrah?" he demanded.

"I have been sent by Mistress Viviana with a message to Mr. Humphrey Chetham," replied the young man, in great confusion.

"Indeed!" exclaimed Catesby, angrily. "And how dared you convey a message to him, without consulting me on the subject?"

"I was not aware you were my master," replied Martin, sulkily. "If I owe obedience to any one, it is to Mr. Chetham, whose servant I am. But if Mistress Viviana gives me a message to deliver, I will execute her commands, whoever may be pleased, or displeased."

"I did but jest, thou saucy knave," returned Catesby, who did not desire to offend him. "Here is a piece of money for thee. Now, if it be no secret, what was Miss Radcliffe's message to thy master?"

"I know not what her letter contained," replied Martin; "but his answer was, that he would come to the hall at midnight."

"It is well I ascertained this," thought Catesby, and he added aloud, "I understood your master had been arrested and imprisoned."

"So he was," replied Martin; "but he had interest enough with the Commissioners to procure his liberation."

"Enough," replied Catesby; and striking spurs into his charger, he dashed off.

A quarter of an hour's hard riding brought him to the hall, and, on arriving there, he proceeded at once to the wounded man's chamber, where he found Viviana and Garnet.

"Have you succeeded in your errand?" cried the former, eagerly. "Will Doctor Dee come, or has he sent the elixir?"

"He will bring it himself," replied Catesby.

Viviana uttered an exclamation of joy, and the sound appeared to reach the ears of the sufferer, for he stirred, and groaned faintly.

"Doctor Dee desired me to tell you," continued Catesby, drawing Viviana aside, and speaking in a low tone, "that your other request was granted."

Viviana looked surprised, and as if she did not clearly understand him.

"Might he not refer to Humphrey Chetham?" remarked Catesby, somewhat maliciously.

"Ah! you have learnt from Martin Heydocke that I have written to him," returned Viviana, blushing deeply. "What I was about to ask of Doctor Dee had no reference to Humphrey Chetham. It was to request permission to privately inter my father's remains in our family vault in the Collegiate Church. But how did he know I had any request to make?"

"That passes my comprehension," replied Catesby, "unless he obtained his information from his familiar spirits."

Shortly after this, Doctor Dee and Kelley arrived at the hall. Catesby met them at the gate, and conducted them to the wounded man's chamber. Coldly saluting Garnet, whom he eyed with suspicion, and bowing respectfully to Viviana, the Doctor slowly advanced to the bedside. He gazed for a short time at the wounded

man, and folded his arms thoughtfully upon his breast. The eyes of the sufferer were closed, and his lips slightly apart, but no breath seemed to issue from them. His bronzed complexion had assumed the ghastly hue of death, and his strongly-marked features had become fixed and rigid. His black hair, stiffened and caked with blood, escaped from the bandages around his head, and hung in elf-locks on the pillow. It was a piteous spectacle; and Doctor Dee appeared much moved by it.

"The worst is over," he muttered: "why recall the spirit to its wretched tenement?"

"If you can save him, reverend sir, do not hesitate," implored Viviana.

"I am come hither for that purpose," replied Dee; "but I must have no other witness to the experiment except yourself, and my attendant Kelley."

"I do not desire to be present, reverend sir," replied Viviana; "but I will retire into that closet, and pray that your remedy may prevail."

"My prayers for the same end shall be of-



Doctor Dee recuscitating Guy Fawkes

fered in the adjoining room," observed Garnet; and taking Catesby's arm, who seemed spell-bound by curiosity, he dragged him away.

The door closed, and Viviana withdrew into the closet, where she knelt down before the crucifix, Doctor Dee seated himself on the bed-side; and taking a gourd-shaped bottle, filled with a clear sparkling liquid, from beneath his robe, he raised it to his eyes with his left hand, while he placed his right on the wrist of the wounded man. In this attitude he continued for a few seconds, while Kelley, with his arms folded, likewise kept his gaze fixed on the phial. At the expiration of that time, Dee, who had apparently counted the pulsations of the sufferer, took out the glass stopper from the bottle, the contents of which diffused a pungent odour around; and wetting a small piece of linen with it, applied it to his temples. He then desired Kelley to raise his head, and poured a few drops down his throat. This done, he waited a few minntes, and repeated the application.

"Look!" he cried to Kelley. "The elixir

already begins to operate. His chest heaves. His limbs shiver. That flush upon the cheek, and that dampness on the brow, denote that the animal heat is restored. A third draught will accomplish the cure."

"I can already feel his heart palpitate," observed Kelley, placing his hand on the patient's breast.

"Heaven be praised!" ejaculated Viviana, who had suspended her devotions to listen.

"Hold him tightly," cried Dee to his assistant, "while I administer the last draught. He may injure himself by his struggles."

Kelley obeyed, and twined his arms tightly round the wounded man. And, fortunate it was that the precaution was taken; for, the elixir was no sooner poured down his throat than his chest began to labour violently, his eyes opened; and, raising himself bolt-upright, he struggled violently to break from the hold imposed upon him. This he would have effected, if Dee had not likewise lent his aid to prevent him.

"This is, indeed, a wonderful sight!" cried Viviana, who had quitted the closet, and now

gazed on, in awe and astonishment. "I can never be sufficiently thankful to you, reverend sir."

"Give thanks to Him to whom alone they are due," replied Dee. "Summon your friends. They may now resume their posts. My task is accomplished."

Catesby and Garnet being called into the room, could scarcely credit their senses when they beheld Guy Fawkes, who by this time had ceased struggling, reclining on Kelley's shoulder, and, except a certain wildness in the eye, and cadaverousness of hue, looking as he was wont to do.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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